Convention focuses on leadership and nursing innovations

Meet me in San Diego: November 6-10, 1999

The 35th biennial convention of Sigma Theta Tau International offers insight and inspiration to nurses from around the globe on the profession as it moves toward the year 2000.

"Avenues to the Future," November 6-10, will be held at the Town and Country Resort in San Diego, California, with an action-packed agenda of educational sessions, workshops, presentations by health care's top leaders, recognition awards, special events and much more. For more information about the convention, E-mail us at: sandiego99@sttin.edu.

Convention at a glance

Each of the three program days will feature a featured and concurrent sessions, special events, exhibits, and research and clinical poster displays. There will be two sessions each day for attendees to network informally with speakers, workshop leaders, and prominent nurses.

New this year is "The Art of Nursing" display that showcases creative and expressive arts in nursing. Throughout the convention, attendees can view poetry, music, art, drama, dance, photography, quilting and other creative and expressive arts submitted by nurses.

Clinical Sessions: "Innovations in Practice" offers insights into nursing informatics, community nursing, and nursing education. Featured speaker Dame June Clark, RN, PhD, FAAN, dean and professor of the University of Michigan School of Nursing, will offer a keynote address on the expansion of nursing knowledge in this century and the paths for nursing in the next century. Her presentation, "Avenues for Generations and Translation of Nursing Knowledge for the 21st Century: Opportunities and Challenges," will offer her insight as a nationally recognized contributor to nursing research. Dr. Hinshaw was the first permanent director of the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. Throughout her career, she has studied nursing topics including quality of patient care and grief.

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Nursing careers highlighted through new web site

"Career Profiles in Nursing" to be launched at convention

As students begin making career choices in high school and college, they may use the Internet to find out about their options. Acknowledging the web-savvy youth of today, Sigma Theta Tau is launching a new web-based product, Career Profiles in Nursing, to help attract and recruit students into nursing.

This new service will be featured within Sigma Theta Tau International's existing web site at www.nursingsociety.org.

This web-based product will help to educate potential nurses and web users about the diverse practice areas of nurses, said Santa Crissal, MA, ANP, RNC, Chair, Profiles Task Force Chair. "This site will help build awareness of nursing's diverse opportunities and aid in recruiting younger students, as well as reinforce the image of nurses as educated professionals."

The nurses profiled will, in a sense, serve as mentors to students or other nurses having similar career goals and will represent many different facets of the profession. The goal is to offer as much information as possible. One could explore fields such as critical care, oncology, pediatrics, military, intensive care and geriatrics. Each profile will include a photo, a job description, the person's education and career path, income range, position responsibilities—anything one would want to know if pursuing a nursing career. Visitors will also have the opportunity to be linked to schools of nursing, so they may explore educational opportunities and curriculum requirements.

The society plans to develop Career Profiles through collaborations with chapters, nursing schools, high school guidance counselors and others. Career Profiles will be launched for members during the biennial convention in November.

AIDS/HIV research indexed through internet knowledgebase

Nurse researchers track AIDS/HIV studies for nearly two decades through unique model

Nursing research on AIDS/HIV from the early 1980s through present day is captured in an Internet knowledgebase, allowing users to retrieve all details of the studies and view causal association models from the content. Knowledgebase is essentially a database of scientific knowledge. In this case, from the scientific literature. The user enters queries on a subject from panels of variables studied and obtains the research findings (the knowledge) directly. The person who builds the database content, the knowledgebase builder, reads research studies and pulls out the data and details of the study. The information is organized and entered into a software program that stores and manages the knowledgebase.

The AIDS/HIV knowledgebase is innovative in structure. It is the first database built from an 'ars'-system created by Dr. Judith Graves, nursing informatics scholar-in-residence, Sigma Theta Tau International, an honor society of nursing. The content of the AIDS/HIV knowledgebase, built by Dr. Graves, is the work of other nurse scientists such as Barbara Baliga and Barbara Goldrich with the assistance of Georgetown University graduate students. Although biomedical and nursing guidelines on AIDS/HIV are available, this knowledgebase was accepted for development because nursing care knowledge was not well represented in other sources.

The public can access the AIDS/HIV knowledgebase, in a ready-made mode, through the Virginia Henderson International Nursing Library link at www.stli.inpui.edu. The society's library is continuing to process the HIV/AIDS literature to develop variables and concepts and findings/conclusions.

The initial project was funded through a Helen Hayes Foundation grant, awarded to Sigma Theta Tau to modify the "ars" interface to run in a Windows environment, build selected knowledgebase and to test the research as a teaching paradigm. Currently, the knowledgebase builders are assisted in maintaining the information by nurses in AIDS Care and the Expert Panel of the American Academy of Nursing.

Graves said in the future the society hopes to provide a publication venue for electronic knowledgebases and a new publication for publishing research on the Internet.

For more information on the knowledgebase, please contact Dr. Graves at 1-800-647-7975.

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State of the Science Congress

19 groups will gather in nation's capital to focus on health care research

From the nation's top scholarly organizations will meet in Washington, D.C., this fall to explore the value of nursing research in creating better health care for the public.

"Better Health Through Nursing Research: State of the Science Congress" will be held September 15 - 18 at the Marriott Wardman Park. The congress is cosponsored by 19 nursing organizations including Sigma Theta Tau International, National League for Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, American Academy of Nursing and National Council of State Boards of Nursing, to name a few.

The congress provides special training sessions and plenary sessions focused on growing areas of research during this decade; a summary of past nursing research and future projects, developing research agendas; critiquing the scope and development of the current state of the science of nursing; and discussing innovations in health care to clinicians who administer patient care.

New Web site unveiled

Services, information and two-way communication available in an instant

A new look for the Sigma Theta Tau web site was launched in May that was designed to be easier to use, expand online membership services and provide visitors with more efficient access to information they want and need.

The redesigned site also provides interactive, two-way communication between headquarters and society membership.

New features

A major feature of the site is a resource for the media that provides story ideas, press releases and nursing spokespersons for reporters writing health care or medical stories. This section of the site fits with a society initiative to increase media coverage of nurses. Another new addition to the site is a first-time visitor feature.

"This new design is the first step in a three-year strategic plan. The site will deliver better connectivity for members to headquarters and allow nurses everywhere to access knowledge," said noodles, executive director, executive officer, Sigma Theta Tau International, "and have expanded the line of products and services offered on the site in an effort to stay on the cutting edge of technology. We have restructured the site to be more user friendly."

Online Registration

Through E-commerce, the new site will allow members to register and pay for the 1999 biennial convention online beginning August 1. The site also features values-added registration options for the public.

Advertisers now have online access to rates, insertion and deadlines, available ad sizes, convention program advertising and editorial themes for Reflections and Image: Journal of Nursing Scholarship. Convention sponsors and exhibitors can check exhibit room rates, sponsorship packages and travel accommodations for the convention.

Future initiatives for the site include online membership renewal, online purchasing of items from the Catalog of Products and Services, chat rooms, an international nurse exchange and web banking.

To see the site, please visit www.nursingsociety.org. Feedback is always welcome.

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Sigma Theta Tau has a key role in creating the future of nursing by helping to develop nurse leaders and scholars who will generate and disseminate knowledge for utilization by nurses," said Sigma Theta Tau International President Eleanor Sullivan. More than 140 research papers, including individual presentations and symposia, will be presented in the breakout sessions the congress offers. The schedule also includes poster viewing, research funding exhibits and many networking opportunities.

The registration fee for prior to September 1 is $325 and, following that date, is $350. For more information and a registration form, please visit the society's web site at www.nursingsociety.org/research/issue.html. All events for the congress will be held at the Marriott Wardman Park. For room reservations, contact the hotel at 888.228.9298 before September 1.
Unraveling the mystery of media relations

Media panels reveal tips for nurses working with reporters

Sigma Theta Tau is working to equip its members with the needed tools for working with the media in their local communities. During the past year the society held several regional conferences that included a panel on nursing and the media with participants from local print and broadcast media including CBS This Morning, USA Today, CNN, Time Health, and NBC, to name a few.

The panels provided information on the current views on local coverage of nursing, as well as reactions to the Woodhull Study on Nursing and the Media commissioned by Sigma Theta Tau. The study identified the lack of references to nurses in the media and brought to light the need for nurses to become proficient in working with reporters. A wrap-up report of the discussions and advice from the regional conference media panels will be available to chapters and individuals later this year.

Panelists offered these tips for nurses working with the media:

1) Call the media. Contact your local health reporter, medical, health or public health reporter, or the city or assignment desk and introduce yourself. Ask to have lunch or stop by for five minutes and give the reporter an idea of an upcoming change, a relationship with the reporter and they will be more likely to call you as a source in the future.

2) Provide organized ideas. Have authoritative people willing to go before a camera and discuss the subject. Be aggressive in helping reporters.

3) Read the local news and react to it. Follow a reporter’s stories for a few weeks and get to know what types of things they are covering and what types of things they might be looking for.

4) Be patient. Be ready to actually sell a story idea to an overworked reporter.

5) Don’t be confrontational. Don’t come across as “It’s really not fair if you don’t cover nurses.” Assume the reporter is already educated on the issues and don’t imply they don’t understand why a story is important.

6) Offer feedback. Media panelists said they rarely hear from nurses on stories that have run in the local media. Be willing to point out to a reporter when they’ve done a good job and when they could have done a better job. Ask them why a nurse wasn’t included in an article and offer suggestions for local sources they could use in the future.

7) Be accessible. When on deadline, the media panelists confirmed that reporters will talk to who they can get in touch with and who they know is reliable. If you can’t talk to a reporter, offer other sources who are available.

8) Offer story ideas. Use E-mail, fax or write a quick note to give reporters ideas for stories. Think of ideas that are compelling and new. Reporters don’t want to cover what was in another paper yesterday.

9) Work with your hospital or medical center’s public relations department and work out specific story ideas. Learn who you need clearance from within your organization to talk with a reporter so you can go straight to that person when you are called for an interview. Cut through as much work as possible in advance of a media call so you can meet the reporter’s deadline.

10) Require undergraduate students to learn media relations as part of their academic curriculum.

11) Create your own newsworthy story. The conference included exercises on how to write a good story. Try writing the crux of a newsworthy story in one sentence. Understand what makes a good story and what is news. Practice writing a short piece about a noteworthy nursing moment.

12) Call the switchboard of the media outlet and make sure you have the right person on the phone with the appropriate spelling before you send an idea to that person.

For more information, please contact Andrea McDonald at 1.888.634.7575 or 517.631.1741 or E-mail at: mede@nursing.soc.illinois.edu.

Plan paves nursing’s future

Sigma Theta Tau to unveil strategic plan at biennial convention

In selecting “Avenues to the Future” as her biennial charge for 1997-1999, President Eleanor J. Sullivan established the groundwork for an unprecedented, organization-wide strategic planning process. To ensure a successful outcome, a Strategic Planning Task Force was developed and included individuals who represented a variety of membership segments. Task force members have met monthly and maintained a timeline of activities. Recommendations will be sent to the board of directors for adoption in July 1999.

The document will contain a revised mission statement and a set of issues, rationales, goals and strategies to be addressed through the year 2000.

Member feedback

A wide net was cast to discover new information about the expectations of members and other constituents. Several methods of data collection were developed to gather perceptions of local experiences with the organization. Included were: a written survey that accompanied all of the member renewal mailings; interviews with the executive office of key nursing organizations and external supporters; and focus group discussions which included the Past Presidents’ Fellowship, Virginia Henderson Fellows, regional coordinators, instructors, external supporters and other leaders.

As critical issues were identified, member feedback was requested. For example, a videotape was produced and distributed to each chapter president. In rich, point-counterpoint discussions, leaders analyzed the extent to which the organization is international and whether or not it is time to move from a position of political neutrality to one of active lobbying. Chapter feedback regarding these issues was requested and members were also invited to send comments on a draft mission statement. Focus group discussions were held at the seven regional meetings and select chapters examined issues related to globalization and the lifetime career development needs of members.

Developing goals

Seven trends were identified when the data were sifted. Findings were validated throughout the year. As a result, goals and strategies will center around supporting nursing research, strengthening chapter-quotient relationships, promoting professional nursing, expanding international links, developing a leadership agenda and supporting scholarship development. The planners drew the exciting conclusion that it is time to lay the groundwork for creating a community of learning for members interested in expanding upon the scholarship of nursing practice, education, research and leadership. Society learning networks will be created to assist the member to maintain excellence in practice. Together, members will create local environments for developing nursing knowledge of direct benefit to citizens around the world.

The society invites its members to stay in contact on the strategic plan is unveiled this summer. Updates on the process are available on the society web site www.nursing.org. Members can also attend the biennial convention in San Diego and engage in focus group discussions that will shape the creation of this global community of learning among nursing scholars.
Preliminary 1999 Convention Program

5 NOV. 6
Noon-6:30 pm Registration
5:30-7:30 pm President's Reception
8:00-10:00 pm Founders Awards Banquet
11:00-3:00 pm Nikols Rendezvous Center
6 NOV. 7
2:00-4:00 pm Nell J. Theta Nurses of the Future Panel Discussion Session
7 NOV. 8
9:00-10:00 am CONCURRENT CLINICAL SESSIONS DEPARTMENT OF NURSES REGISTRATION AND DELEGATION CERTIFICATION
10:30-12:00 pm CONCURRENT CLINICAL SESSIONS DEPARTMENT OF NURSES REGISTRATION AND DELEGATION CERTIFICATION
1:00-3:00 pm CONCURRENT CLINICAL SESSIONS DEPARTMENT OF NURSES REGISTRATION AND DELEGATION CERTIFICATION
4:30-6:30 pm CONCURRENT CLINICAL SESSIONS DEPARTMENT OF NURSES REGISTRATION AND DELEGATION CERTIFICATION
7:00-9:30 pm Heritage Society Dinner for Virginia Henderson Fellows
8 NOV. 9
11:00am-12:30 pm CONCURRENT SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS: SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH SESSIONS
12:30-2:15 pm Tribute Luncheon
TUES., NOV. 9
7:30-8:00 am LEADERSHIP SESSIONS BREAKFAST AND KEYNOTE: PLENARY SESSION 4
8:00-10:00 am LEADERSHIP SESSIONS BREAKFAST AND KEYNOTE: PLENARY SESSION 4
10:00-12:00 pm Registration and Delegation Certification
12:30-2:15 pm Tribute Luncheon
WED., NOV. 10
1:30-5:00 pm HOUSE OF DELEGATES I
3:00-5:00 pm HOUSE OF DELEGATES II
11:00am-12:15 pm CONCURRENT LEADERSHIP SESSIONS
12:30-2:00 pm Audrey Hopkins Luncheon
2:00-4:00 pm Indianapo lis Convention Medalists/Scholarships Luncheon
4:45-6:00 pm CLOSING PLENARY SESSION
5:15-6:30 pm DELEGATE BRIEFING
7:00-9:00 pm MEET THE CANDIDATES RECEPTION

1999 Convention Medal Sponsors
PLATINUM
University of Pennsylvania Health System Nursing Services and University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing
GOLD
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Kaiser Permanente
Mount Sinai Medical Center
SILVER
University of San Diego, Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science
BRONZE
People to People Ambassador Programs
University of Cincinnati, College of Nursing
J.V. Benson
Each of these medal sponsors receives a booth, ad in the official program and half-page sponsorship of an event as part of the medal sponsorship package. In addition, they will receive a "button banner" ad on the convention section of the society's web site. For more information on these and other sponsorship opportunities during the 1999 biennial convention, please contact Kathy Beeston or Rachael Allman at 1.888.634.7575 (U.S. and Canada), 1.800.634.7575.1 (Global) or E-mail: marketing@stillinput.org. Or visit our web site at www.nursingsociety.org.