



Candidate Booklet:
2025 Election
for
2026 ACNL
Board of Directors



Board of Directors Election

The Association of California Nurse Leaders is proud to present the 2025 Ballot for the election of our 2026 Board of Directors.

Regular, Emeritus and Lifetime Members are eligible to vote for corporate officers and directors *in their geographic region*.

Affiliate Members do **not** have access to the electronic ballot, as they are ineligible to vote.

***Voting will open on August 4, 2025 and
close at 5:00pm on August 18, 2025***



PRESIDENT-ELECT

**Danielle Gabele, DNP, RN, CENP,
CCRN-K, CPHQ**

Chief Nurse Executive
Ventura County Medical Center & Santa Paula Hospital

Ventura, CA

Education:

- DNP- Grand Canyon University (2022)
- MSN- Western University of Health Sciences (2009)
- BA, Economics- University of California, Berkeley (2003)

ACNL Activities:

- ACNL Board Representative South and Chapter Liaison (2024-present)
- ACNL member (2015-present)
- ACNL Healthy Work Environment committee co-chair (2019-2023)
- ACNL Chapter, Ventura and Santa Barbara

Related Professional Activities:

- ACNL MentorLead mentor and mentee (2017, 2018)
- AONL Nurse Manager Fellow (2016)
- American Hospital Association Next Gen Fellow (2022)

Statement:

As a current Board member, I have had the privilege of working alongside Dr. Long to carry out ACNL's mission. If selected, I would continue to build on the tremendous work in membership growth, philanthropy and financial health. I have been proud to see the partnership with academia begin to grow; this is an area I would continue to grow. I would also like to see more engagement from nurse leaders closer to the frontline at the charge nurse or professional development/education level. I'd like to see us focus on having more experienced members be incentivized in some way to bring new leaders to committees, chapter meetings, etc. Financially, I would be focused on ensuring we can retain the great programming we have had while growing our philanthropic and revenue generating programs. I would heavily support the efforts of the philanthropy subcommittee of the board to grow Circles of Giving.



SECRETARY/TREASURER

Susan Acquisto, DNP, R.N., NEA-BC, CHC

Chief Executive Officer
Regulatory, Risk, Compliance Specialists, Inc.
(RRCS)

Pleasanton, CA

Education:

Doctor of Nursing Practice in Health Systems Executive Leadership, University of San Francisco, CA 2012

Master of Science in Health Care Administration, California State University, Long Beach, CA. 1990

Bachelor of Science in Nursing, California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock, CA. 1986

Associate Degree in Applied Science, Major: Nursing, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH 1979

ACNL Activities:

ACNL Member 1987-2000, 2003-Present

ACNL East Bay Chapter Officer Positions,
2008-2011

Communication/Voice Committee 2013-
2014

ACNL Board Member North 2017-2020

ACNL Secretary/Treasurer 2020-2022

ACNL Finance Committee 2018-present

ACNL Co-Chair Philanthropy Sub-Committee
of the Board 2022-Present

ACNL Awards

ACNL 2016 Award for Best Practice in
Nursing Research

Related Professional Activities:

- LifeMoxie Mentor to ELA
- ANCC Certified Nursing Administration
Advanced 1991-2001
- ANCC Nurse Executive Advanced,
Board Certified 2001-present
- HCCA Certified Healthcare Compliance
2011—present
- Member AONL 2011-Present
- Member HCCA 2001-Present
- Member HFMA 1995-2025, Board Member
1998-2001
- Board Member Pro Active Health (pH) Labs
2015-present
- Co-founder and Board Member, The Bili
Project Foundation 2012-2022

Statement:

California nurse leaders are driving transformative changes across healthcare by advancing innovation, equity, and strategic collaboration. In an era defined by workforce challenges, value-based care, and evolving technologies, our leadership must remain agile, evidence-informed, and people-centered. Achieving the quadruple aim enhanced patient experience, improved population health, reduced costs, and clinician well-being—requires strong partnerships among academia, clinical practice, and community stakeholders.

As a seasoned healthcare executive and nurse leader with expertise in clinical systems, reimbursement, quality, and compliance, I am committed to strengthening ACNL's mission through strategic leadership, collaborative engagement, and purposeful action. I understand the operational, financial, and clinical levers that influence health system performance and am dedicated to empowering nurse leaders at every level. Through the focused efforts of ACNL committees and the Board, we will continue to amplify the voice of nursing and advance solutions that elevate the profession and improve health outcomes for all Californians.



BOARD - ACADEMIA

Fang-yu Chou, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, CNE

Professor and Assistant Director
School of Nursing, San Francisco State University

San Francisco, CA

Education:

Ph.D. in Nursing - University of California, San Francisco (2002)
M.S. in Nursing Administration - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1996)
B.S. in Nursing - Kaohsiung Medical University, Taiwan (1991)
Postdoctoral Fellow - University of California, San Francisco (2005)
FNP Certification - Samuel Merritt University (2019)

ACNL Activities:

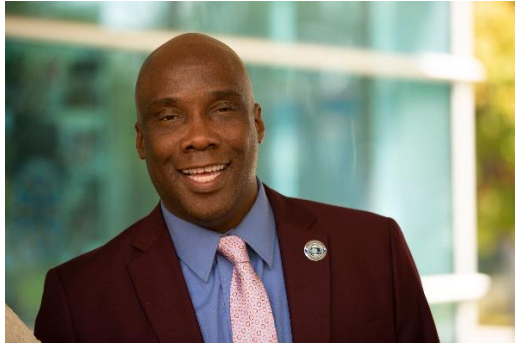
- Chair, ACNL Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Committee (2025-present)
- Co-Chair, ACNL Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Committee (2024-2025)
- Chapter Vice President, ACNL Greater San Francisco Chapter (2024-2025)
- Member, Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Committee (2023-present)
- ACNL member (2019-present)

Related Professional Activities:

- Executive Committee, Academic Senate, San Francisco State University (2023-2025)
- Governance Committee, Sigma Theta Tau International (2021-2023)
- Program Planning Committee, Sigma Theta Tau International Region One Conference (2021-2023)
- Treasurer, Nu Psi Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau (2014-2023)
- Chapter President, Nu Psi Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau (2012-2014)
- Coordinator, Transcultural Nursing Issue Group, Oncology Nursing Society (2014-2016)
- Fulbright Senior Scholar (2011)
- American Nurses Association
- Sigma Theta Tau International
- Western Institute of Nursing
- CSU Nursing School Director Network

Statement:

As ACNL continues to expand its leadership role in nursing in California, I see two strategic opportunities to further its mission. First, broadening membership and leadership representation to include diverse nursing sectors, types of practice settings, and professional backgrounds - along with student representatives from across regions - will enrich the organization's inclusivity and innovation. Second, enhancing ACNL's visibility will amplify its influence on best practices, policy, education, and leadership development. While current outreach through social media and the website is effective, deeper integration between committees and chapters can foster stronger collaboration and a more cohesive community. The existing quarterly meetings between committee chairs and chapter board members are a strong foundation; introducing a structured orientation for these roles would further support leadership transition and succession planning. I am committed to contributing to these efforts and advancing ACNL's vision through inclusive, strategic, and sustainable leadership.



BOARD-ACADEMIA

**Austin Nation, PhD, RN, PHN,
NE-BC**

Assistant Professor
California State University, Fullerton

Fullerton, CA

Education:

PhD, University of California, San Francisco, San Francisco, CA (2016)
MSN – Leadership, California State University, Fullerton (2011)
BSN, California State University, Fullerton (2009)
ADN, Long Beach City College (1982)

ACNL Activities:

- Member ACNL, 2009-present
- Quality, Safety, Engagement - 2025
- Orange County/Long Beach Chapter
President-Elect - 2017
President – 2017 -2018
Past-President - 2019
- Greater San Francisco Chapter
Member – 2011-2016
Secretary 2015-2016
- Membership Experience Committee -2016

ACNL Scholarships:

2015 Excellence in Leadership


Related Professional Activities:

- President-Elect (2025) Governor of Nursing Education, Western Institute of Nursing (2020-2023), President
- Past-President, Association of California Nurse Leaders (ACNL), OC/LB Chapter (2019)
- President, Association of California Nurse Leaders (ACNL), OC/LB Chapter (2017- 2018)
- President- Elect, Association of California Nurse Leaders (ACNL), OC/LB Chapter (2017)
- President, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) @ American Nurses Association – Minority Fellowship Program, Alumni Working Group (2016 – present)
- Member, American Nurses Association
- Member, American Nurses Association
- Member, Western Institute of Nursing
- Member, Sigma Theta Tau International

Statement:

I believe that ACNL needs to prepare itself for the next generation of nurse leaders and be every intentional about utilizing technology to reach this population. We need to re-think our “business as usual approach” and move past the “we’ve done that before” mentality and position ourselves to continue to be the premier nursing leadership agency in California. There needs to be more of an emphasis on doing outreach, including ideas like “bring a friend for free” incentives so people can find out what our organization is all about.

We must move towards utilizing engaging electronic platforms to keep our members aware of what is going on. We want our members to feel like there is always something fun and exciting happening in the organization, adding value to their membership so that they are more ready to feel connected and stay involved. Let’s move ACNL forward into the future and beyond!

	<p style="text-align: center;">BOARD-CENTRAL</p> <p>Karen T. Descent, DNP, RN, CEN, NE-BC</p> <p>Chief Nursing Officer Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital</p> <p><i>Hollister, CA</i></p>
<p><u>Education:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNP – University of San Francisco (2023) • MSN – Walden University (2014) • ASN – Pasadena City College (1986) 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>ACNL Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACNL Member (2016 – present) • ACNL Health Policy Committee Member (2018 – present) • ACNL Health Policy Education Sub-Committee Chair (2024 – present) • ACNL Webinar, Co-Presenter- Health Policy Mid-Year Update: Review of Key Legislation (2022) • ACNL Annual Conference Co-Presenter Breakout Session - Nursing is Not a Solo Sport: Innovative Interview Processes for New Graduate and Specialty Programs (2019) • ACNL Mentoring (2024 – present) 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Related Professional Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Nurses Association member • Sigma Theta Tau International • Critical Access Hospital Network (CAAHN) CNO Committee • CHA CNO Advisory Group

Statement:

The most significant issue facing ACNL is ensuring that nursing remains a central, influential force in shaping healthcare policy and advancing evidence-based practice in an evolving, complex healthcare landscape. As the voice of nurse leaders in California, ACNL must address regulatory barriers, scope of practice limitations, and disparities in care delivery. I bring the experience of a Chief Nursing Officer and current Chair of the ACNL Health Policy Education Sub-Committee, where I lead efforts to inform and engage nurse leaders in health policy advocacy. I am committed to advancing reforms that expand nursing roles, promote nurse-led innovation, and ensure equitable access to care. Strengthening leadership development, interprofessional collaboration, and alignment with emerging care models are essential to ACNL’s mission. I am dedicated to elevating nursing leadership at decision-making tables. I would be honored to represent you and continue the work of transforming healthcare across California.



BOARD-CENTRAL

Shelby Reed, RN, MSN

Emergency Department Director
Emanuel Medical Center

Turlock, CA

Education:

- MSN- Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD (2021)
- BSN- California State University, Stanislaus (2007)

ACNL Activities:


- NC-ACNL President (2025)
- NC-ACNL President-Elect (2024)
- NC-ACNL Secretary (2020-2021)
- NC-ACNL Board Member (2020-Present)
- NC-ACNL Member (2010-Present)
- ACNL Member (2010-Present)

Related Professional Activities:

- Member, American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL)
- Member, Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM)
- Member, American Association of Critical Care Nursing (AACN)
- Chair, Adventist Health Systems Professional Practice Committee (2019-2020)

Statement:

ACNL is one of nursing's best-kept secrets; it's a highly impactful and respected organization among its members and stakeholders. However, one of its ongoing challenges is enhancing statewide visibility and recognition. Increasing awareness of ACNL's leadership, innovation, and advocacy work is essential to fully realizing its influence and strategic potential across California.

	BOARD-NORTH
	John Carias-Sugay, DNP, RN, NEA-BC Executive Director, Acute Care Services John Muir Health <i>Walnut Creek, CA</i>
<u>Education:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNP – University of California, San Francisco (2020) • MSN – Samuel Merritt University (2006) 	
<u>ACNL Activities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate Past President – East Bay Chapter (2023 – present) • Attendee – Annual Program (2024, 2022) • President – East Bay Chapter (2021-2023) • Regional Meeting Panel Participant – Foundation for Leadership Excellence - “Essence of Leadership” (2022) • East Bay Chapter President-Elect (2020) • ACNL Member (2018 – present) • Attendee – Foundation for Leadership Excellence (~2014) 	<u>Related Professional Activities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podium Presenter – Enhancing Early Detection of C. diff: Implementation of an Our Practice Advisory Alert – 2025 UCSF Clinical Inquiry Conference (accepted) • Poster Presenter - Empowering Nurse Leaders: Mentors in Evidence- Based Practice - 2025 Magnet Conference (accepted) • Poster Presenter - Magnet Conference 2024 - "Patient Throughput: A System- wide Approach to Managing Patient Flow" • Member - Nominations Committee, American Organization of Nurse Leaders, 2 year-term (2024-present) • Attended various local, state, and national webinars facilitated by: American Nurses Association, Advisory Board, Association of California Nurse Leaders, American Organization of Nurse Leaders • Guest Speaker – University of California, San Francisco DNP Program (Various Courses) • Carias-Sugay, J. October 29-31, 2024. “Patient Throughput: A System wide Approach to Managing Patient Flow.” ANCC National Magnet Conference. New Orleans, LA. • Carias-Sugay, J., Hultgren, M., Browder, B. A., & Chen, J.-L. (2021). Nurse Leaders’ Knowledge and Confidence Managing Disasters in the Acute Care Setting. Nursing Administration Quarterly, 45(2), 142–151.

Statement:

A key challenge facing ACNL is remaining relevant and responsive to nurse leaders across all practice settings, not just within acute care. As the nursing profession evolves, ACNL must also evolve to reflect the diversity of its membership, including emerging leaders, executive nurses, and those in non-traditional roles. Sustaining member engagement amid increasing demands and widespread burnout is also a pressing concern. To address this, ACNL must prioritize mentorship, offer flexible and meaningful professional development, and advocate boldly at the policy level to amplify the voice of nursing. As technology and AI rapidly transform healthcare delivery, nurse leaders need tools and education to lead thoughtfully in this space. Above all, ACNL must continue to champion compassionate leadership, support nurses at every level, and promote initiatives centered on high-quality, equitable care. Our strength as an organization lies in our ability to adapt, advocate, and uplift the next generation of nurse leaders.



BOARD-NORTH

Daniel Ramberger, DNP, RN, NEA-BC

Chief Nurse Executive
Kaiser Permanente

Redwood City, CA

Education:

- Doctor of Nursing Practice, University of California San Francisco (2025)
- Master of Science in Healthcare Administration and Interprofessional Leadership (MS-HAIL), University of California San Francisco (2019)
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Harding University (2010)
- Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations, Harding University (2005)

ACNL Activities:

- ACNL Mentorship program 2025
- Silicon Valley Chapter Officer (Secretary/Treasurer) 2025
- Membership Experience Committee (statewide committee) co-chair 2025
- Membership Experience Committee (statewide committee) member 2024
- South Bay Chapter Officer (Membership Director) 2023

Related Professional Activities:

- Member of American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL)
- Member of National Black Nurses Association (NBNA)
- Member of Sigma Theta Tau-Alpha Alpha Lambda Chapter (Board position in 2023-2024 & 2024-2025)
- Member of Sigma Theta Tau-Alpha Eta chapter
- LEAN Six Sigma Black Belt certified
- UCSF faculty position

Statement:

A significant challenge facing ACNL is sustaining membership growth while cultivating the next generation of nurse leaders. There is a need to engage early- and mid-career professionals through targeted outreach, leadership development, and mentorship, while continuing to harness the wealth of knowledge, experience, and wisdom of our seasoned nurse leaders. Simultaneously, nurse leaders across California are navigating complex workforce challenges, including burnout, diminished meaning and joy in work, and need for stronger leadership development. ACNL is uniquely positioned to lead statewide collaboration and advocacy efforts that support resilient, inspired nursing leadership. ACNL must continue advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging while offering value-driven programming that reflects the evolving healthcare landscape. Strengthening partnerships within academia, healthcare organizations, and professional associations will be key to building leadership capacity. Through innovation, strategic engagement, and connection, ACNL can remain a trusted resource and champion for nurse leaders across all regions and stages of practice.



BOARD-SAN DIEGO

Janet Hanley, MBA, BSN NEA-BC

System Vice President Orthopedics and
Neurosciences Service Line
Sharp HealthCare

San Diego, CA

Education:

- MBA Healthcare Management-University of Phoenix
- BSN-University of Phoenix
- ADN-State University of New York Farmingdale

ACNL Activities:

- Member 2007
- Quality and Patient Safety Council 2012-2017-Chair 2014-2015
- San Diego Chapter President-2013-2014
- Board of Directors San Diego-2015-2017
- Annual Conference Program Committee-2017, Chair 2020 and 2021

Related Professional Activities:

- Magnet Appraiser 2007 to present
- Magnet Appraiser Team Leader 2018-present
- Expert Opinion Councils-technology vendors 2016-present
- USD Board Advisor for Clinical Informatics Program 2024-2025
- International Presenter on centralizing patient placement and the EMR use

Statement:

I believe, the most significant issue facing ACNL in the coming years is Membership recruitment, engagement and retention. We want to make sure we are perceived as relevant and important to nurses at every level. One focus should be on the senior nursing leadership level to see what they are looking for to get them and keep them engaged. We need to practice targeted personal outreach to non-members. We should survey the nursing leadership in California to see what they need, not only the current members. We should strive to develop a catalog of evidence-based best practices related to patient experience, nursing workflow, care delivery and those addressing concerning trends in health care. Finally, highlighting all the incredible initiatives and innovation from our members to our members and beyond will promote a connection and a shared purpose on why a nurse should be a member of ACNL.



BOARD-SAN DIEGO

Mary Kay Shibley, DNP, RN

VP, Business Development & Clinical Experience
Invisalert Solutions, Inc.

San Diego, CA

Education:

- DNP – Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, CA (2020)
- MSN – University of Phoenix, San Diego, CA (1999)
- BSN – California State University, Dominguez Hills, CA (1996)
- AS, Nursing – Grossmont Community College, El Cajon, CA (1994)

ACNL Activities:

- ACNL Member (2017- present)
- ACNL Board Representative-San Diego (2022 – 2024)
- ACNL Communication Voice Committee (2017 – present) (Chair 2022 – present)
- ACNL Philanthropy Subcommittee of the Board (2024-present)
- ACNL Nurse Emergency Support Fund Team - Chair (2025 Inaugural year)
- ACNL San Diego Chapter Member (2018 - present)
- ACNL San Diego Chapter-President (2022, 2024 & present)

Related Professional Activities:

- AONL Member (2022-present)
- ANA Member (2024-present)
- California Association of Health Facilities Member (2022-2025)
- ACNL Executive Leadership Academy (ELA) (2019)
- ACNL, Center for Nurse Leadership, Foundations of Leadership Excellence
- HSAG Technical Expert Panel member – Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Outcome & Process Measure Development and Maintenance Project
- Certified Crucial Accountability Trainer

Statement:

Two major challenges that ACNL will face over the next two years are member retention & recruitment. There are many professional nursing organizations, so ACNL must stand out.

It is imperative that we create a meaningful, valuable and sought-after organization. ACNL must continue to find ways to support our chapters, increase member engagement and recruitment. Helping chapters provide education, mentorship, and networking opportunities, engages members. Engaged members share their experiences with colleagues, creating a desire to join. Students are the future of ACNL. Early engagement creates belonging. We must facilitate chapter outreach to academia.

The Communication & Voice Committee is working to create a sense of connection and community through chapter and member spotlights highlighting chapter work and introducing board members. I would like your vote to represent the San Diego area so I may work directly with the board making ACNL a truly sought after organization.



BOARD - SOUTH

Nancy Blake, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, NHDP-BC, FACHE, FAONL, FAAN

Chief Nursing Officer
Los Angeles General Medical Center
Adjunct Associate Professor, UCLA School of Nursing

Los Angeles, CA

Education:

PhD - University of California, Los Angeles (2012)
MN - University of California, Los Angeles (1989)
BSN - Mount Saint Mary's University (1980)

ACNL Activities:

- ACNL Member (1989 - present)
- ACNL Health Work Environment Committee Co-Chair (2016 - 2024)
- ACNL San Fernando Valley Treasurer (2019)
- ACNL Research Committee (2014)
- ACNL Quality and Safety Committee (2013 - 2014)
- ACNL Environment of Practice Committee (2008-2010)
- ACNL Representative for ACNL to the California Disaster Surge Project with state DHS (2006 - 2007)

Other Professional Awards

- AONL Nurse Leader to Watch (April 2025)
- Fellow in the American Organization of Nurse Leaders (FAONL) (2022)
- UCLA Nursing Distinguished Alumni Award (2022)
- Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE) (2021)
- American Association of Critical Care Nursing (AACN) Circle of Excellence Award (2016)
- Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN) (2013)
- DAISY Health Equity Research Grant (2021)
- Gamma Tau Chapter Research Grant (2024-2025)

Related Professional Activities:

- American Nurses Association
- Sigma Theta Tau
- National Advisory Committee on Children and Disasters (Special Government Employee) (2021 - 2014)
- Association for Leadership in Nursing Science (ALSN)
- American Organization of Nursing Leadership (AONL)
- American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN)
- American Academy of Nurses (AAN)
- American College of Healthcare Executives
- AACN Beacon Reviewer
- ANCC Magnet Appraiser

ACNL Awards

- ACNL Nursing Leadership Excellence Award (2006)

Statement:

These are turbulent times in healthcare. Executive orders and federal potential funding changes to our vulnerable patients are driving organizations to stay ahead of the changes by potential cutting needed programs and needed positions in nursing to address future potential lack of funding to their organization. ACNL needs to support nurse leaders through these difficult times and share information as it becomes available. It is also important that ACNL works with California Hospital Association to address and engage members in working with elected officials to educate them as they vote for legislation. As we move away from the pandemic it is important that we strive to create healthy work environments to improve retention and support to the new graduates coming in to the workforce get the support they need to transition to practice and that we improve retention in organizations to help decrease costs and improve patient outcomes.



BOARD-SOUTH

**Chris Tarver, DNP, RN, CNS,
NEA-BC, EBP(CH)**

Executive Director
City of Hope National Medical Center

Duarte, CA

Education:

- DNP; NorCal Consortium San Jose State University/California State University-Fresno (2015)
- MSN; San Jose State University (1995)
- BSN; San Jose State University (1990)

ACNL Activities:

ACNL & ACNL South Bay Chapter/San Gabriel Valley

- Chapter Secretary ACNL/San Gabriel Valley Chapter, January 2023 - present
- Vice President ACNL/South Bay Chapter, September 2017 – July 2019

ACNL Member since 2017

Related Professional Activities:

AONL

- AONL Advocacy Committee/Nurse Leader in Advocacy; January 2023 - present
 - Panel presenter Hill Day June 2024
- AONL Member since 2020

American Nurses Association & American Nurses Association\California

- President, ANA\California, 2023- present (re-elected March 2025 for final 2-year term)
- Vice President, ANA\California, March 2021 – March 2023
- Nursing Practice Director, ANA\California; March 2017 -March 2021

ANA & ANA\C Member since 2015

Statement:

The most significant issue facing ACNL is continued membership growth in order to: strengthen the collective voice, sustain the organization, and have enough funding for program development that supports California Nurse Leaders. In these unprecedented times, uniting as a common voice in advocacy for nurse leaders, the profession of nursing, and the health and well-being of humanity are essential. Strategies to grow membership that would be cost efficient include grassroots efforts by the regional board directors to actively outreach directly to California nurse leaders and demonstrate the value of membership in ACNL and promote the programs and resources available. Also, partnering with chapter leaders to present benefits of ACNL directly at management meetings at healthcare organizations would aid in member recruitment. Targeted social media presence with strategically aligned messaging would be a third strategy for membership growth.