



## **2024 Year in Review**

# **Celebrating Another Strong Year for Alaska’s APRNs**

*As we reflect on 2024, it’s clear that the Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) in Alaska have continued to make significant strides. From legislative victories to regulatory advancements, we are proud to share the highlights from a year of progress and advocacy within our state.*

*The Alaska APRN Alliance, which represents the four advanced practice nursing specialties—Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Midwives, Nurse Anesthesiologists, and Clinical Nurse Specialists—has worked tirelessly to advance our profession. Together, we’ve contributed to making Alaska a healthier place for all.*

### **APRN Alliance Board of Directors\***

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>President</b>	Marianne J-Petty, CNP	Marianne J-Petty, CNP
<b>President Elect</b>	Sara Kozup-Evans, CNP	Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, CNP
<b>Immediate Past Pres</b>	VACANT	VACANT
<b>Treasurer</b>	Marisa Bune, CNP	Marisa Bune, CNP
<b>Secretary</b>	Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, CNP	Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, CNP
<b>Director</b>	Amber Michael, CNM	Jen Heller, CNM
<b>Director</b>	Anjali Madeira, CNM	Anjali Madeira, CNM
<b>Director</b>	Jen Lent, CRNA	Pam Boyleston, CRNA
<b>Director</b>	Mary Magnusen, CRNA	Whitney Willcut, CRNA
<b>Director</b>	Julia Sadowski, CNS	Julia Sadowski, CNS
<b>Director</b>	Nan McGrath, CNS	Nan McGrath, CNS
<b>Special Assistant to Board</b>	Chris Logan, CRNA	Chris Logan, CRNA

\*[Board of Directors CVs and Pictures](#)

## **Advancing Alaskan APRNs Requires a Proactive Approach**

***Welcome to Ben Mohr, our new lobbyist!***

The Alliance welcomed Ben Mohr as its new lobbyist in 2024. Ben’s commitment to APRNs has been evident in his efforts to position APRNs as trusted healthcare resources for legislators. His proactive approach in engaging policymakers ensures the voices of APRNs are heard, particularly as Alaska faces unique healthcare challenges.



## 2024 Legislative and Regulatory Work

### State-Level Achievements

- Participated in discussions with the Division of Insurance regarding the impact of rescinding the 80th Percentile Rule.
- Nominated Dr. Sara Kozup-Evon to the newly established Alaskan Psychedelic Medicine Task Force under HB 228.
- Submitted over 10 letters supporting APRNs and their patients.
- Actively monitored and commented on 17+ state bills, including meeting with four state legislators.
- Successfully blocked legislation introducing Anesthesia Assistants through advocacy efforts.
- Committee members continued to foster ongoing working relationships with state legislators and with the help of our lobbyist, Ben Mohr, were able to forge new relationships with several legislators. These new relationships provided us the opportunity to hold back the introduction of legislation that would have been detrimental to APRNs in Alaska.
- Active membership with the Alaska Hospital and Healthcare Association monitoring state legislation affecting healthcare of our patients.

### Federal-Level Advocacy

- Five Alaskan APRNs met with Senators Murkowski and Sullivan and Representative Peltola in Washington, D.C., highlighting APRNs' critical role in Alaska's healthcare.
- Legislative committee monitored and commented on 5+ federal bills.
- Secured support from the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association for the ICAN Act.

## Looking Forward to 2025

As we move into 2025, the Alaska APRN Alliance is dedicated to advancing key initiatives to support APRNs and the communities they serve.

- **Reimbursement Equity:** Achieving reimbursement equity remains a top priority for all Alaskan APRNs. The Alliance will work diligently to ensure that APRNs receive fair compensation that reflects their critical role in Alaska's healthcare system.
- **Increased Advocacy in Juneau:** The Alliance will organize multiple fly-ins to Juneau, where APRNs, accompanied by our new lobbyist Ben Mohr, will meet with legislators to discuss pressing healthcare issues and advocate for policies that benefit patients and providers alike.



- **Anesthesia Assistant Legislation:** The Alliance will actively monitor any proposed legislation regarding Anesthesia Assistants and take proactive measures to protect the interests of CRNAs and the safety of Alaskan patients.
- **Strengthening Our Reputation:** Through ongoing education efforts, the Alliance aims to solidify its reputation as a patient-centered, trusted healthcare advocate, ensuring that the voices of APRNs are respected and valued in all healthcare discussions.

## Committee Work

### Workforce Survey & Reimbursement Equity

*Chaired by: Teresa Lyons, CNP*

*Committee Members:; Lisa Jackson, CNP, Jill Janke, CNP, Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, CNP, Morgan Brissette, CNP; Pam Boyleston, CRNA*

The final report from the Workforce Survey & Reimbursement Equity Committee has been completed and distributed to key legislators. This report serves as a critical resource in advocating for APRNs and addressing workforce challenges across Alaska. Lisa Jackson, CNP was the primary author of the report and Jill Janke, CNP completed the data cleaning and analysis.

Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, Dr. Lisa Jackson, and Dr. Marianne Johnstone-Petty held a productive meeting with Jared Kosin, CEO of the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA), and the contractor regarding a new report entitled: *2024 Alaska Healthcare Workforce Analysis*. The discussion focused on opportunities for future collaboration and ensuring consistency in data reporting regarding APRNs. Upon review of the report, members of the Workforce committee noted that discrepancies exist between the AHHA 2024 Report and the Alliance's data collected in the recent survey as well as numbers reported by the Board of Nursing.. All parties agreed that aligning information on Alaskan APRNs is essential to prevent confusion and to maintain accurate, reliable insights for workforce planning and policy development.

### Legislative and Health Policy Committee

*Co-Chaired by: Chris Logan, CRNA & Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, CNP*

*Committee Members in 2024: Lisa Jackson, CNP (AANP Region X Representative), Whitney Wilcut, CRNA, Sara Kozup, CNP, Kathryn Ault, CNM Mareike Heatwole, CNP.*

*Committee members for 2025, Chair: Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch CNP*



*Marianne Johnstone-Petty, CNP, Lisa Jackson, CNP (AANP Region 10 representative), Whitney Wilcut, CRNA, Kathryn Ault, CNM, Allison Moe, CNP, Julia Sandowski, DJ Foister, CNP,, Mareike Heatwole, CNP, Pam Boyleston CRNA, Jill Jasinski, CNP, Students: Adam Looney and Hope Meyn.*

The Legislative Committee continues to actively monitor state and federal policy issues that impact APRN practice and the broader healthcare community. This includes tracking legislation, providing input on policy developments, and ensuring APRNs have a voice in key decisions. Please see the attached summary of bills tracked for the 2024 Legislative session.

A subcommittee composed of Sara Kozup, CNP, Whitney Wilcut CRNA and Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, CNP with assistance of Marieke Heatwole, CNP identified lobbyist candidates and invited four individuals to interview with the subcommittee. Ben Mohr, owner of The Mohr Company was selected and a contract was signed by the leadership of all 4 APRN Associations. All 4 leaders of the member APRN Associations were co-signers of the contract demonstrating their support of one lobbyist to represent all four of the Associations.

January 2025 is the first year of a new two-year legislative session. The committee along with our new Lobbyist, Ben Mohr of The Mohr Company has been busy reviewing new bills. Prior to the legislative session, some members of the Legislative and Health Policy committee met with new and returning members of the legislature to communicate our interest in working with them on legislation and we requested to be on their “do call” list when legislation is introduced or if they have questions about health care policy or practice. Our message was: “We are here to help you because we care about the patient”.

We encourage all APRN Alliance members to participate in long-range planning efforts, including introducing themselves to elected officials in their local districts and during the Legislative Session in Juneau. Building relationships with legislators is critical to strengthening our advocacy efforts.

Legislative Fly-Ins are in the process of being scheduled for March and April. APRNs will have the opportunity to engage directly with policymakers and highlight the essential role of APRNs in Alaska's healthcare system.

Additionally, we welcome your input via social media about legislative or healthcare policy issues in the news or political developments in your district. Your insights are invaluable in shaping our advocacy strategy.



## **Membership Communication & Engagement**

*Chair: Dr. Marianne Johnstone-Petty*

*Recruiting for additional members.*

Maintaining strong communication and member engagement continues to be a challenge. Marianne has been diligently updating the website, managing social media engagement (currently limited to Facebook), and sending regular email communications.

The importance of this work cannot be overstated—fostering cohesion, increasing participation, and ensuring APRNs are actively engaged are vital to the health and longevity of the Alliance and all associated professional membership organizations.

We encourage members to consider how they, or someone they know, can contribute to this critical area. Whether through social media outreach, content creation, or assisting with communication strategies, your involvement can make a significant difference in supporting our shared mission.

## **Board of Nursing Collaboration & Updates**

*Attended by: Dr. Morgan Brissette, CNP PMHNP Teresa Lyons, Marianne Johnstone-Petty, CNP; Stephanie Wrightsman-Birch, CNP; Chris Logan, CRNA*

The Alliance maintains a strong relationship with the Board of Nursing under Executive Administrator Patty Wolf. Key accomplishments include:

- Integration of APRN data into the NURSYS project to improve workforce planning.
- Recognition of the Workforce Survey & Reimbursement Equity Committee's efforts; Dr. Lisa Jackson will present our findings at the February BON
- Advocacy for adding a second APRN seat to the Board of Nursing.

**The Alliance deeply values the Board of Nursing's hard work and dedication in advancing these critical efforts!**

## **Growth & Sustainability of the Alliance**

The Alliance remains focused on ensuring its long-term growth and sustainability through strategic initiatives and collaborative efforts:

- **Website Revamp:** Significant progress has been made in revamping and updating the Alliance's website to serve as an engaging and informative resource for members and stakeholders.
- **Quarterly Reports:** To foster transparency and strengthen ties between member organizations, the Alliance President, supported by the board and committee chairs,



now provides quarterly reports. These reports highlight accomplishments, ongoing projects, and upcoming initiatives to keep everyone informed and engaged.

- **Support for Member Associations:** The Alliance has actively worked to support its four member associations, mentoring them in rebuilding their boards, enhancing member involvement, and promoting better collaboration. Encouraging attendees of Alliance meetings to also join their respective professional organizations has been a priority.
- **Fiscal Sustainability:** Recognizing the value of an engaged and high-quality lobbyist, the member organizations agreed on a necessary increase in dues to ensure effective legislative advocacy. This commitment reflects the collective understanding of the importance of strong representation for Alaska's APRNs.

These efforts underscore the Alliance's dedication to fostering a resilient, unified, and forward-thinking organization that supports the professional and advocacy needs of APRNs in Alaska.

## **Investment in Legislative Advocacy**

The four member organizations acknowledged the critical need for a high-quality, engaged lobbyist to effectively represent Alaska's APRNs. Recognizing the importance of strong legislative advocacy, it was understood that this would require a nearly threefold increase in the lobbyist's salary.

Extensive discussions and multiple meetings were held to ensure consensus among the member organizations. Ultimately, all four groups agreed that an increase in dues was essential to secure the trust, respect, and engagement of legislators. This investment reflects the collective commitment to advancing the voice and influence of APRNs in shaping Alaska's healthcare policies.

## ***2024 Leadership & Recognition***

***Many APRNs in Alaska have achieved significant recognition for their contributions to the healthcare field. Here are some of the distinguished leaders and their accomplishments:***

- ***Chris Logan, CRNA: 2024 Providence Nurse of the Year Honoree***
- ***Andrea Lewis, CNP: 2024 Providence Nurse of the Year Honoree***
- ***Bernadette Clark, CNP: 2024 Providence Nurse of the Year Honoree***
- ***Bethany Berry, CNM: 2024 Providence Nurse of the Year Honoree***
- ***Ellen Reeder, CNP: 2024 Providence Nurse of the Year Honoree***
- ***Theodore Walker, CNS: 2024 Providence Nurse of the Year Honoree***
- ***Anjali Madeira, CNM: Received a pilot grant to examine outpatient cervical ripening for labor induction ending July 2025. Anjali & colleagues applied for funding for maternal***



*transport study, and a large study on intrahepatic cholestasis in pregnancy. Both through the NIH.*

- **Dr. Rose Timmerman:** *2024 CNS Fellow of the National Association for Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS).*
- **Dr. Morgan Brissette:** *National Leader and Committee Member of the National Advisory Council on Nursing Education & Practice. Personal Invite for a Nationwide NP Group Meeting.*
- **Dr. Lisa Jackson, CNP:** *Alaska Representative for the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), starting in 2023.*
- **Dr. Kathryn Ault, CNP, DNP:** *Director of Midwifery at South Peninsula Hospital.*
- **Carrie Peluso, CNP:** *Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) of PAMC and newly appointed inaugural Alaska Representative for the Northwest Organization of Nurse Leaders (NWONL). She also serves as a Board Member for the All Alaska Pediatric Partnership (A2P2).*
- **Dr. Marianne Johnstone-Petty, CNP, DNP:** *Named Alaska Nurse Practitioner of the Year by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. She also co-authored "Recommendations for Specialty Palliative APRN Graduate Education" with other national APRNs.*
- **Dr. Jennifer Lent, CRNA, DNP:** *Chief of Anesthesia Services and OR Medical Director at the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Center in Bethel. Co-authored 2 published articles this past year.*
- **April Erickson, CRNA:** *Medical Director of the Anesthesiology Department at Kodiak Hospital, APRN Representative for the Alaska Board of Nursing, and leader of an Evidence-Based Pre-Anesthesia Testing Clinic to streamline the patient experience.*
- **Senator Cathy Giessel, CNP:** *Senate Majority Leader of the Alaska Senate, representing District E of the Anchorage Municipality.*

***Alaskan Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs) are paving the way for additional awards and recognition in 2025!***

## **A Bright Future**

*As 2025 unfolds, Alaska's APRNs remain committed to excellence, resilience, and collaboration. Our efforts are a testament to the profound impact advanced practice nurses have in transforming healthcare and improving the lives of Alaskans.*

*The future of healthcare in Alaska is brighter than ever, thanks to the amazing work of its APRNs!*