



Celebration of our Charter Fellows

**Denise Laine, Ph.D., MSN, NP-C,
FNP, COHN-S, CCM, FAANP**

Introduction

Dr. Laine has served many roles over her career. Her clinical practice included occupational health, and managing employee health. She has been an expert witness and has served many roles in the American Academy (Association) of Nurse Practitioners, from state representative to president. She was a Primary Care Health Policy Fellow and has been involved in health policy on a state and national level.

Abstract

In this interview Dr Laine discusses her participation in the initial planning for the development of the Fellows of the American Academy (Association) of Nurse Practitioners (FAANP). The organization that began as a small group of dedicated individuals was moving into a corporate model with rapid growth. The fellowship was the opportunity to recognize experts in practice, research, education, and policy. The fellowship recognized the importance of the clinical role along with those of leader, academic, and researcher. It lends credibility to the clinical roles and the White Papers written by the Fellows are recognized by politicians, nursing leaders, and the medical community as important contributions to the future of health care during this time of transition. She further discusses the research agenda and funding, as well as the mentoring program. She feels strongly that nurse practitioners need to be involved in health policy and become actively involved in the political process.

Short Bio

Dr Laine was born in Manhattan, reared on Long Island, graduate of Hollywood High School, UCLA, and USC, has served AANP in many roles over the past several years. She was Colorado State Representative, Region 8 Director, treasurer, conference committee member and Chair, membership Secretary, and AANP Foundation president. In 2000, she was elected to the position of President-Elect of AANP and she served until 2005 as President and immediate Past President.

Dr. Laine also represented AANP as a Primary Care Health Policy Fellow in 2000. She worked on the Colorado task force which was successful in the formation of nurse practitioner day in that state. She is recognized as an expert witness, providing testimony and setting precedent that established the ability of future nurse practitioners to serve as expert witnesses competent to critique physician care in Workers Compensation and labor arbitration cases.

Dedicating her professional career to occupational health, Dr. Laine worked as a nurse practitioner and employee health manager for US West, Media One Group and currently holds the position of manager of employee health and infection control at National Jewish Health in Denver, Colorado. She continues to precept students in her practice.

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AANP Oral History Project



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The following interview took place at her home in Lakeside, Colorado, where she resides with her husband, Ray, an electrical engineer, and her 94-year-old mother.

JSL: It has been a long time, Denise, since the Board meetings around Jan Towers' kitchen table when everyone had to get up when a rest room was needed!

DL: Those years were golden! There was such a sense of camaraderie among the group. The ideas were many and the growth of the organization was enormous. There were 300 members when I joined and look at the Academy today. "The children have grown up and got good jobs!!!"

JSL: How did you feel being included in the Charter group of Fellows?

DL: I was truly surprised, honored, and grateful to be included with so many leaders of the profession. I had participated in many planning sessions about a possible fellowship, and I felt a real sense of accomplishment when it came to fruition. It was a time of great activity within AANP – very exciting to be a part of it. You just could not miss a meeting, or you could never catch up! The Fellowship was one step in the emergence of AANP from a “mom and pop” organization to a true corporate structure and the Fellowship took the best and brightest to look at future goals in the areas of research, practice, leadership, and academics.

JSL: What has FAANP meant to you as a person and as a nurse practitioner?

DL: As a person devoted to clinical practice, I feel strongly that the Fellowship has recognized the importance of the clinical role along with those of leader, academic, and researcher. It lends credibility to our roles and the White Papers written by the Fellows are recognized by politicians, nursing leaders, and the medical community as important contributions to the future of health care during this time of transition.

JSL: Where do you think the Fellowship should focus its energies for the future?

DL: The mentoring program is excellent, and I would like to see it expand into wider scopes of practice – new graduates, those in specialty practice, and those in acute care settings. The research agenda, which now consists of small grants underwritten by the Foundation and the Academy, will hopefully become stronger with the ability to bestow larger funded projects in the future. Cutting-edge research is absolutely essential to the future of the NP role. I fervently hope that the balance will be maintained among the research, leadership, clinical, and academic sections of the Fellowship.

JSL: What are your thoughts about FAANP and health policy?

DL: Nurse practitioners must be part of this transition and leaders in FAANP must be involved in the changes taking place. Educating parents about details of new health care systems is of paramount importance as is preparing NP students in the academic setting to take leadership roles in the political arena. And, of course, we must all be advocates of the profession so that we are ready to take a leadership position in the new health care system.

JSL: How do you find time for a personal life?

DL: What most people do not know about me is that I am an independent Mary Kay Beauty consultant. I find this to be an uplifting and positive group of women who have a great sense of fun. I don't have the “pink Cadillac” yet but I am working on it!

I also am active in my sorority, Delta Zeta, sometimes giving talks on health care topics. I volunteer at a local animal shelter with a special emphasis on rescuing cats. I collect Walt Disney stamps, and first day covers. Many of these are produced by islands that consider it their major industry. Above all, I believe that balance in life is most important to a sense of happiness.

JSL: It sounds as if you have a happy and diverse life, Denise. I look forward to hearing more about it in the future. It has been a pleasure to catch up with you this evening.

