

NOVA History 2010

NOVA began 2010 under a new management contract with Dove Associates, with Susan Dove as the Executive Director of NOVA. A formal announcement was sent out to the membership via E-News from NOVA. NOVA's new address is:

NOVA
47595 Watkins Island Square
Sterling, VA 20165
New Telephone number: (703) 444-5587

The NOVA Board of Directors met in Washington, DC on January 14, 2010. The following activities and actions took place:

- Established an ad hoc committee to review the NOVA Bylaws and recommend revisions/updates.
- Reviewed and updated the NOVA strategic plan.
- Approved changing the organization's fiscal year to January 1-December 31.
- Approved conducting an annual audit at the end of the current fiscal year.
- Approved revision /update to descriptions of and criteria for NOVA's Annual Awards.

The deadline for award nominations was set as June 1, 2010

- Accepted the new Nurse Emeritus brochure.
- Agreed to seek guidance from VACO/ONS regarding the feasibility of having NOVA Chapters assist with a service project from the American Medical ID company to distribute blood pressure tracking wallet cards to Veterans with hypertension

The NOVA Board of Directors held its seventeenth Annual Legislative Roundtable on January 15, 2010 at the DAV National Headquarters in Washington, DC, providing an opportunity for key stakeholders in veterans' issues to gather and share information. NOVA President Nancy Clafflin welcomed everyone, and Legislative Co-Chair Sharon Johnson invited participants to discuss concerns and issues. Topics covered included:

- Passage of Senate Bill 1963 "Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services act of 2009"
- Equity pay for Nurse Executives at the Nurse V level
- Lifting the pay cap for Nurse Anesthetists • Consistent implementation of the locality pay law
- Adequate funding to support veterans and staff members returning from war
- Increase the pay cap under the nurse locality pay system. This change would also favorably affect the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA)

- Information and training on Locality Pay Surveys to assist in applying the law to ensure VA nurses receive appropriate pay raises
- Reestablishment of the Health Professionals Scholarship Program for non-VA employees (VA Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program (38 U.S.C. 7601-7636))
- Revision of the legislation allowing the 36/40 hour work schedule so that tours can overlap from Saturday to Sunday
- Hybrid Title 38 status for nursing assistants
- Health care for part-time employees without significant financial penalty
- Revision of legislation governing employees' travel pay to support the Nurse Travel Corps
- Programs to help decrease delays in hiring licensed staff
- Support for the VA Nurse Academy for all facilities
- Adequate funding for the Education Debt Reduction Program
- Adequate funding for the VA Nursing Outcomes Database (VANOD)
- Waiver of offset from pay for certain reemployed annuitants
- Support, resources, and funding for Supply, Processing, and Distribution (SPD) staff who have been realigned to the Nurse Executive
- Concerns regarding the centralization of Information Technology resulting in a loss of local control and inability to access and use needed equipment and software
- Support for the principles of Magnet
- Continuing challenge of caring for war veterans
- Caregiver issues
- Timely access to rural health care
- Concern that rural health issues aren't resolved with major contracting out of VA services

- Independent budget; sufficient, timely, and predictable funding for VA health care
- Finalizing legislation from the last session
- Needed improvements in the claims process to reduce delays
- Strengthen and energize human resources management efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified VA personnel and redouble efforts to advance succession planning
- Maintaining VA's critical infrastructure
- Seamless transition from DOD to VA including electronic medical records that travel from duty stations to wherever veterans receive VA health care
- Positive transition from military service to civilian service depends on funding programs for education, employment, and training to provide meaningful careers
- Improvement of benefits for adaptive automobile use
- Concerns related to inappropriate third party billing
- Staffing shortages
- Support for women veterans' issues including VA environment not welcoming to women veterans
- Recognizing contributions of women veterans
- Campaign to inform women veterans of their rights to care
- Homelessness among veterans, particularly those with children
- Mental health issues
- Reintegration of veterans
- Traumatic brain injury
- Centers of excellence for mental health and TBI
- Care for families, including assistance for caregivers and children

- Concern that VA funds are being spent appropriately
- New GI Bill issues
- Vocational rehabilitation issues
- Jobs for veterans and keeping veterans gainfully employed
- Number of beds available for long term care
- Adequate funding for VA research and VA research labs
- Continued support for VA/DOD CRNA program
- Revision of CRNA qualification standards
- Major reform bill in progress for civil service affecting only Title 5 and need for similar bill for Title 38
- Emergency response
- Transformation of VA healthcare and healthcare reform including the patient centered medical home initiative
- Role of nursing at the center of healthcare initiatives • Structured language for nursing
- Nursing staffing methodology
- Registered Nurse residency pilot program
- Campaign to increase nursing certification • Safe patient handling program.

Participants included:

Cathy Rick, Chief Nursing Officer, Office of Nursing Services; **Betty Moseley Brown**, Center for Women Veterans; **Kristy Park**, Professional Staff Member for the House Subcommittee on Health; **Preethi Raghavan**, Legislative Assistant for the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs; **Gary Ewart**, Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research; **David Polner**, Association of VA Nurse Anesthetists; **Joy Ilem**, Disabled American Veterans; **Steve Robertson**, **Barney Searle**, and **Jeff Steele**, American Legion; **Blake Ortner** and **Alethea Predeoux**, Paralyzed Veterans of America; **Teresa Morris**, Veterans of Foreign Wars; and **John Bradley**, Consultant in Veterans Affairs, DAV.

Participants from the NOVA Board of Directors included: President, **Nancy Claflin**; President-Elect, **Joan Clifford**; Vice President, **Larry Lemos**; Treasurer, **Mary Seaman**; Secretary, **Sharon Johnson**; Immediate Past President, **Cecilia McVey**; Directors: Janet Minard, Melissa Nixon, Thelma Roach-Serry, Sharon Simpson, Kelly Skinner, and Dolores Zander; Past Board Members: Margaret Kruckemeyer, Dianne Nelson and Mary Raymer; and Executive Director Susan Dove.

The NOVA Board signed on a letter with other Nursing organizations, Medical organizations and Veteran organizations, urging the House and Senate Committees of Veterans Affairs to address issues in legislation passed, but not completed last year. The letter was delivered to committee leaders on January 15, 2010.

A Chapter Contact teleconference was held on February 17, 2010. Minutes from the previous call were reviewed; discussion on how to increase membership took place.

In February 2010, NOVA Announced its 30th anniversary celebration will occur at the Annual Meeting in 2010. It will be held from October 28-30, 2010 in Crystal City, Arlington, VA, right before the 35th Annual Marine Corps Marathon on October 31.

NOVA Calls for 2010 National Election Nominations with the following positions open for the next election: • Treasurer • Membership Secretary • Three Board of Director's positions

The Every-Member-Get-A-Member campaign was extended to March 31, 2010.

On March 8, 2010 NOVA sent out a call for poster presentations along with the criteria for submitting a poster proposal. Selected posters will be presented at the NOVA Annual Meeting in October 2010.

In March 2010 the **Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act (HR 3590)** was signed into law. It authorized a new 50 million grant program from 2010-2014 to support the development of nurse-managed health clinics to provide primary care or wellness services to vulnerable populations, and was a major victory for nurse managed clinics, advanced practice nurses and the patients they serve.

A chapter Contacts conference call was held March 19, 2010. Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and the Blood Pressure Wallet Card project was discussed. There is no cost for the cards and the company, American Medical ID in partnership with Mended Hearts, a subsidiary of the American Heart Association has pledge to deliver one million cards free of charge to veterans.

On March 20, 2010, the regional meeting titled, “Holistic Healthcare and Innovations.” was held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona; Cynthia McCormack, PhD, RN, Associate Director, Patient Care Services, Phoenix VA Healthcare System presented the welcome, followed by “VA Nurse Emeritus & Soldiers’ Angels” Mary Raymer, PhD, RN, Faculty, Capella University, Chairperson, VA Nurse Emeritus; “Healing, Connecting & Finding Our Strengths” Betty Merritt, CHTP, Founder & Director, Merritt Center; “Using Acupuncture to Treat Behavioral & Mental Health Conditions” Craig Amrine, L.Ac., Owner, Hidden Rhythm Acupuncture; “Technological Innovations” Gregg Gordon, MS, RN, Clinical Application Coordinator, Phoenix VA Health Care System; “The Benefits of Hot & Cold Stone Therapy” Mary D. Nelson, LMT, MLSTI, RM, Founder, LaStone Therapy, Inc.; “Chiropractic Practice: Dealing With Burn Out, Behavioral and Mental Health” Henning Handberg, DC, and “American Indian Traditional Philosophy & Its

Application to Nursing Practice” Yvonne Garcia, BSN, RN, Retired VA Nurse, Standing Woman Consulting. The program was well received, evidenced by the participant’s evaluation of the speakers and over all program.

The NOVA Membership Committee Teleconference was held on April, 1, 2010. Previous minutes were reviewed, as were the updated Chapter Rosters, the new “Member-Get-A-Member” Campaign was discussed and payroll deduction will be encouraged. An update was given on the VA Nursing specialty certification, and on the Nurse Emeritus program. Information about service project- B/P card distribution was also discussed.

Due to the success of the previous campaign, NOVA announces a new “Member-Get-A-Member” campaign to run from April-October 1, 2010. The previous campaign welcomed 155 new members.

The NOVA Board met on April 23, 2010 via conference call. The following activities took place:

- Previous Board meeting minutes were approved
- The strategic plan was reviewed and updated
- Committee reports were accepted
- The 2010 Annual meeting was discussed
- The Blood Pressure Card Project was discussed

On April 12, 2010, the NOVA board agreed to sign with other Nursing organization in support of the FY 2011 Title VIII appropriations.

On April 15, 2010 a call for NOVA awards nominations went out to the membership. The website to access criteria and forms and information was also sent. The deadline for submission is June 1, 2010. The awards will be presented at the 2010 Annual meeting In Arlington, VA in October.

On April 22, 2010 the congressional passage of **S 1963**, the **Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act** passed by unanimous voice vote. The bill was authored by U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka, Chairman of the Veteran's Affairs Committee and was strongly supported by NOVA. It established permanent programs to support the caregivers of wounded warriors improve health care for veterans in rural areas, help VA adapt to the needs of women veterans, and expand supportive services for homeless veterans. A shining moment in that history is the passage of Public Law 111-163, of Public Law 111-163, the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010. Members of the NOVA Board of Directors have been working continuously with Congressional representatives, staff from the Office of Nursing Services, NOVA members, and others to identify issues that needed to be addressed by Congress. NOVA's legislative chair and co-chair, Cecilia McVey and Sharon Johnson, made many trips to Capitol Hill to discuss these issues, along with the regular Hill visits made several times a year by members of the NOVA Board of Directors. This law includes many of those issues that NOVA has been working on most notably the inclusion of nursing assistants as hybrid Title 38 employees which will greatly simplify the hiring process. This alone is an outstanding achievement, and there are many others in this bill.

April 25, 2010, a special program was held at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC in a celebration of the commitment of nurses throughout the world to bring health to their communities, locally and worldwide by 2020. The Nurses Organization of Veteran Affairs (NOVA) was acknowledged as a Bronze Sponsor for the program; Janet Minard, NOVA Board of Director and Susan Dove, NOVA Executive Director represented NOVA at the program. Kathy Rick, Chief Nurse for Veterans Affairs was also present. The International Year of the Nurse (IYNurse) was a collaborative, grassroots, global initiative honoring nurses' voices, values, and wisdom to act as catalysts for achieving a healthy world and was established by Sigma Theta Tau International, Nightingale Initiative for Global Health and the Florence Nightingale Museum in honor of the centennial year of the death of the founder of modern nursing - Florence Nightingale (1820-1910).

On May 1, 2010 the NOVA regional meeting, "VA Nurses: Caring for Our Heroes by Caring for Ourselves" was held in St. Louis, Missouri. Nurses from near and far were welcomed by Richard Holt, the Nurse Executive for the St. Louis VAMC. The meeting was held in the Embassy Suites hotel in St. Charles, Missouri. The conference included information on conflict resolution, shared governance and the magnet journey, nursing informatics and stress management by a panel of lively and entertaining local St. Louis VAMC speakers. The advanced practice nurses received pharmacology credit for the topic, "The Pharmacology of Weight Loss." One of the conference highlights was the guest speaker Alan Bernstein, the Director of Career Development and Workforce Management for the Office of Nursing Services, VA Central Office, who spoke on succession and career planning. The attendees were very eager to absorb this session. The evaluations indicated it was well received. The programs success can be contributed to the planning, organization and work of Melissa Nixon, Joe Mazzola and Susan Dove.

On May 5, 2010 **S 1963**, the **Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act** was signed into law by President Barack Obama. The bill established permanent programs to support the caregivers of wounded warriors improve health care for veterans in rural areas, enhanced mental health care, removed barriers to care for catastrophically disabled veterans, help VA adapt to the needs of women veterans, and expand supportive services for homeless veterans, enhanced VA medical services, strengthens the VA workforce and expands supportive services for homeless veterans.

On August 20, 2010, President Obama submitted to Congress a series of amendments to the FY2011 budget for the Department of Health and Human Services, Including a \$250 million increase to HRSA for the Health Professions program, specifying \$280,000 to Title VII and Title VIII.

NOVA calls for submission of Poster Presentations for the NOVA Annual Meeting to be held October 28-30, 2010.

The NOVA Board of Directors met in Washington, DC on July 16, 2010. The following topic discussion and activities took place:

Professional practice, membership, communications, legislation, education, operations and NOVA Foundation support. The 2010 legislative agenda prepared by Cecilia McVey and Sharon Johnson and Hill visits were also discussed. The legislative agenda included issues related to the budget, recruitment and retention, Information technology and supply and distribution now assigned to the Nurse Executives. The Board made the difficult decision to discontinue the VA nursing certification program due to the nearly \$100,000 initial cost of establishing the program. The core competencies will continue to be developed for use in future NOVA regional meetings.

The issue of extending membership to LPN's was discussed and the decision was made that NOVA would not be doing that at this time, but NOVA would support the development of an LPN organization within the VA.

On Friday, June 4, 2010 the NOVA regional meeting: "VA Nurses: Caring for Our Heroes by Caring for Ourselves" was held at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge, MA. Program topics included promoting health and wellness with therapeutic music, natural healing for the mind, body and spirit, managing anxiety and pain through cognitive behavioral therapy, diet pearls of wisdom, and compassion fatigue. Creating a healthier you through proficiency writing, the healing art of reiki and meditation were also covered. The featured speakers: Joan Clifford, Cynthia Price-Glynn, Janet Mercier, John D. Otis, Rosemary McGovern, RLD, Brandon Erdos, MD, Rosemarie Bass, Connie Perry-Simon, MSN, BC, and Ajahn David Chutiko delivered informative and interesting presentations which kept the audience engaged. This regional meeting was an outstanding success due to the team effort by the Program Planning Committee members: Carmen Concepcion, Donna DeMartino, Susan Dove, Diane McCrackin, Donna Simono and Kelly Skinner.

On 9/21/10 the NOVA Board of Directors reviewed the bylaws in order to determine if updates were needed since they last were amended in 1997. There are some changes needed to correspond with previous Board actions and current tax requirements. The changes include:

1. Changing the name of Associate Members to Emeritus Member (for retired members).
2. Adding the Immediate Past President to the Executive Committee so it includes all officers.
3. Updating the committees to reflect current committees.
4. Providing for an election ballot by electronic voting, email, or mail.
5. Revising the requirements to begin a chapter so you do not have to have 10 members to get started.
6. Revising concurrent membership on the NOVA Board and NOVA Foundation Board to ensure that the NOVA Board (a 501c6 organization under the tax code) does not unduly influence the NOVA Foundation Board (a 501c3 organization under the tax code) so that both boards/organizations are in compliance with recent tax law changes.

The bylaws will be voted on during the Annual Business Meeting at the NOVA Annual Meeting in Arlington, Virginia, October 28-30.

Elections for the NOVA National Board for 2010-2012 were held and the names of the new officers were announced at the NOVA Annual Meeting in October, 2010.

The NOVA Board met in Arlington, Virginia on October 27, 2010 prior to the National meeting and reviewed and updated the Strategic plan for 2011, and the 2011 legislative agenda.

The NOVA Foundation sponsored the 3rd Annual Charity Event on Thursday, October 28th featuring the best comedy show in town in addition to a dinner extraordinaire, silent auction and reception with former Secretary of Veteran Affairs, Mr. Anthony Principi awarding the first Noble Nightingale Award . This new award honors a nurse who has made a significant contribution to the Veterans Health Administration through the advancement and promotion of nursing education and care for America's veterans. There were 150 Charity Event attendees.

On Saturday evening October 30, 2010, a special reception was held for the NOVA Foundation Team Members Participating in the Marine Corp Marathon, MCM10K and volunteers.

The NOVA Annual Meeting was held in Washington, DC, October 28-30, 2010, chaired by **Thelma Roach-Serry**. Attendees earned 13.75 CEUs. After the Presenting of Colors and the singing of the National Anthem, a moment of silence was observed for lost friends. The keynote speaker was **Barbara Bancroft**, a dynamic and highly entertaining speaker who spoke about men's and women's health issues. Key Issues in Nursing, was presented by **Marla J. Weston**, PhD, RN; **Kim Lipsky**, Deputy Staff Director of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, U.S. Senate and **Cathleen C. Wiblemo**, Director of the Sub committee on Health, House Veterans' Affairs Committee were present as part of the Senate & House VA Committee Panel. A special presentation from the National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) was given by **Sarah Holstine**, Legislative Specialist, NARFE. An orientation for Hill visits was presented by **Cecilia McVey** and **Sharon Johnson**, followed by Senate and House visits and a tour of the Nations Capitol. The NOVA Foundation Charity event was held the evening of October 28th and included a reception, silent auction, dinner, entertainment and the presentation of the NOVA Foundation Nightingale Award. A presentation on, Women Veterans Health Issues was presented by **Laura Herrera**, MD, MPH, Director, Comprehensive Women's Health, Women Veterans Strategic Health Care Group, Department of Veterans Affairs. **Mary Seaman**, MS, RN, NEA-BC presented the program, National Initiative for Certification. **Christa Hojlo**, PhD, RN, did a presentation on Cultural Transformation Initiative in VHA Community Living Centers (CLCs). **Dr. Betty Moseley Brown**, Associate Director of the Center for Women Veterans, discussed women veterans across the eras. A poster session brought new ideas and initiatives to be discussed and shared. The Annual Business Meeting and Awards luncheon honored NOVA members and others who have made significant contributions and was moderated by NOVA President Nancy Claflin, RN, PhD, CCRN, CPOHQ, FNAHQ. The bylaw changes were voted on and passed. There were no continuing resolutions presented for discussion. The following awards were presented:

Barbara Chambers Award-Mary Raymer, PhD, RN

Professional Nurse Award for Clinical Excellence- Vivian Jones, RN

Professional Nurse Award for Leadership- Gilda Cain, RN

Silver Star Chapter Award-Chapter 420, Richmond, Virginia

Veterans Award- Margaret Kruckemeyer, MSN, MHS, BS, RN, CNP-CA

A VHA Panel with representatives from the Office of Nursing Services, including **Alan Bernstein**, MS, RN; **Karen Ott**, MSN, RN; **Cheryl Beversdorf**, MHS, MA, RN responded to questions from the floor, with Chief Nursing Officer **Cathy Rick**, RN, FANN, FACHE acting as moderator. After the panel discussion a Town Hall Meeting was held with **Cathy Rick** responding to questions from the floor. On Saturday, **Patricia Quigley** PhD, MPH, ARNP, CRRN, FAAN presented “Creating the Pathway for Evidence-Based Practice”. , MS, RN Presented, “New Qualification Standards”. An OIF/OEF Veteran Panel was present to discuss veteran related issues. **Mary Seaman** provided a special closing session. There were approximately 115 attendees at the NOVA Annual Meeting.

The NOVA Foundation sponsored the 3rd Annual Charity Event on Thursday, October 28th featuring the best comedy show in town in addition to a dinner extraordinaire, silent auction and reception with former Secretary of Veteran Affairs, Mr. Anthony Principi awarding the first Noble Nightingale Award . This new award honors a nurse who has made a significant contribution to the Veterans Health Administration through the advancement and promotion of nursing education and care for America’s veterans. On Saturday evening a special reception was held for the NOVA Foundation Team Members Participating in the Marine Corp Marathon, MCM10K and volunteers. There were 150 Charity Event attendees.

On October 31, 2010 the NOVA Foundation participated in the Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) run and 10K walk/run. This is the 5th year that NOVA has participated, and is still the one and only nursing charity partner for this event. Participants proudly wore red NOVA t-shirts and NOVA visors. The NOVA shirts had the message “VA Nurses Care for America’s Heroes” on the back, and that message was acknowledged by people along the route. Participating in this event not only helped VA nurses by providing scholarships for VA nurses and VA research, but it also helped the participants themselves to have while getting some exercise. NOVA members, who did not walk or run, volunteered at the MCM medical aid station or the NOVA water station. There were ten MCM, thirty-six 10K participants and approximately 20 volunteers. The NOVA hospitality tent provided food, refreshments and a meeting place for volunteers and participants to gather after completing their event or volunteer services.

On November 16, 2010 the updated NOVA strategic plan was sent out to board members. Nancy Claflin suggested that since the time to the next conference is so short, everybody’s terms should be extended, so the next election would be for June 2012. This will be voted on in the January 2011 business meeting to take place January 14 and 15, 2011 in Washington, DC.

On November 17, 2010 NOVA announced that NOVA was now on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/?sk=2361831622#!/group.php?gid=76597218404> and the Facebook page could be accessed by a link on the NOVA website www.vanurse.org

NOVA ended the year with 2, 234 members.

NOVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010-2011

President	(10-13)	Joan Clifford VA Boston Health Care System Boston, MA 857-203-5040
Vice President:	(09-12)	Larry Lemos VA Long Beach Health Care System Long Beach, CA 562 826-8000 x 4146
Treasurer:	(010-13)	Mary Seaman James A. Haley VAMC Tampa, FL 813 979-3672
Secretary:	(09-12)	Sharon Johnson VA Maryland Health Care System Baltimore, MD 410 605-7097
Membership Secretary	(10-13)	Dee Zander Philadelphia VAMC 215 823-5800 x 3990
Directors:	(09-12)	Janet Minard Lebanon VAMC 717 272-6621 x 4994
	(09-12)	Melissa Nixon St. Louis VAMC 314 652-4100 x 64262
	(09-12)	Thelma Roach-Serry Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC Richmond, VA 804 675-5582

	(09-12)	Kelly Skinner VA Boston Health Care System 857 203-6578
	(09-13)	Mary Ann Church Manchester, New Hampshire VAMC 800892-8384 x 5714
Immediate Past President:	(10-13)	Nancy Claffin VA Phoenix Health Care System Phoenix, AZ 602 277-5551 x7333
Executive Director		Susan Dove 703 444-5587
Director of Membership & Administration:		Luba Litvinova 703-444-5587