

ACNA Member Spotlight

Tim Thomas, MSN, RN, CCHP
ACNA Policy Committee Chair



Work experience: I worked for the BOP for 16 years. Starting at the Federal Correctional Complex in Petersburg, VA. Then transferring to the Federal Correctional Institution in Jesup, GA. In 2012, moving into the Regional Nurse Consultant Position, for the Southeast Region.

Why I chose Correctional Nursing: I stumbled into correctional nursing. I was in the Army when I learned about the U.S. Public Health Service. I completed an inter-service transfer from the Army to the PHS. I had no idea what I was getting into at the time.

Why I stayed in Correctional Nursing: This a very rewarding and challenging specialty. You have a lot of autonomy. Your skills have to be top notch. These challenges push a nurse to grow. These challenges also push innovation amongst nurses, especially when resources are low but demand is high. Something so simple as offering self and interacting with the inmates on the yard can be rewarding for both parties.

What I am most excited about the ACNA? There is a voice for correctional healthcare providers. There are many voices for nurse. However, there was no one voice for correctional nurses.. When discussing reforms, nurses need to be at the table. Correctional Nursing was in desperate need for a unified nursing voice, and ACNA is poised to fill that role.