



AAIN-NJ2

Newsletter

March 2021

Executive Board

...

PRESIDENT

Umamaheswari Venugopal,
MSN, RN, CCRN-K

VICE-PRESIDENT

Molly Jacob,
MSN, APN-C, CCRN

SECRETARY

Siby Varughese,
RN, MBA, MA, BSN, OCN, CCRP

TREASURER

Kavita Natarajan,
BSN, RN

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...

Sandra Emmanuel, MA, RN

Soffy Vilson, DNP, RN, NE-BC, LNHA

Rachel Koshy, DNP, RN, APNC

Varsha Singh, DNP, APN-C

Lydia Albuquerque, DNP, RN,
ACNP-BC, CCRN

Past Presidents

...

Sandra Emmanuel, MA, RN

Soffy Vilson, DNP, RN, NE-BC, LNHA

Rachel Koshy, DNP, RN, APNC

Varsha Singh, DNP, APN-C

Thangamani Aravindan, MSN, RN,
CCRN

Lydia Albuquerque, DNP, RN, ACNP-BC,
CCRN

President's Message

Dear AAIN-NJ2 Members,

March 2021 marks the one-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic that put the public at halt though not the healthcare providers, never the nurses. The pandemic that made a global impact, taking away lives of our dear and near including many of our own nurses has scarred us for life. Our lives were and are still disrupted by the trauma that we nurses face every day at the frontline. On behalf of AAIN-NJ2, I pay tribute to the nurses who sacrificed their lives caring for sick patients during this pandemic.

I remember waking up from my sleep crying, hearing the voices of my nursing staff, the environmental staff and even the physicians: "Can I have a mask? Can I have a gown? Are we going to be okay? Am I going to die? I can't breathe! Let us intubate". Constant code blues.

If I, as an Administrative Supervisor, was going through this stress what was the bedside staff going through? I made it a point to stop and check on every individual involved in the direct care of COVID-19 patients and provided them with an opportunity to open up. I realized that this did not help just the nursing staff but also myself.

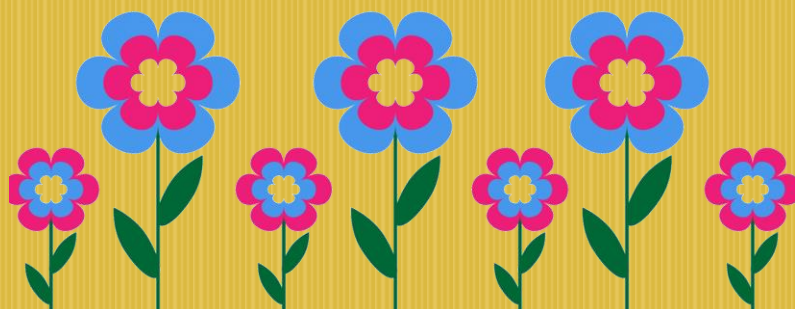
I want to take this opportunity to thank all our nurses at different levels starting with our frontline bedside nurses, practitioners, CRNA, educators and leaders who were working tirelessly throughout the past year to fight this COVID-19 war. As we care for others, remember to provide personal care and self-care, a priority for our own health and safety. AAIN-NJ2 is here as a source of strength to support you during this challenging times.

I will close with the words of Florence Nightingale, "The craving for 'the return of the day', which the sick so constantly evince, is generally nothing but the desire for light." Nurses are still at work though distraught waiting to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Thank You

Uma Venugopal
President, AAIN-NJ2





From the Desk of the Editors

Dear AAIN-NJ2 members,

With 2020 behind us, we are excited to begin 2021. All of us, whether in our roles as nurses at the bedside, or in education, or in the community or in advanced practice, each of us has stepped up and done what nurses always do: improvised and prevailed.

We look forward to another fulfilling year as we continue to adapt to our changing environment, learn to find joy in things that we have taken for granted and grow together as an organization.

Munira Wells

Editor

Tasneem Mohammedshah

Co- editor

*Would you like to see your name in print?
Do you have an article to share with your colleagues?
Email us at aainnj2newsletterchair@gmail.com*

Committee Chairs

...

APN Forum

Pushpa Abraham,
CPNP-PC, MSN, WCNP-PC

Violet Monis,
MSN, FNP-BC, NP-C

Awards & Scholarship

Rashmi Aggarwal,
MSN, APN

Merlin Mendonca,
BSN, RN

Cultural activities

Niti Patel,
BSN, RN, CCRN

Grace Varghese,
MSN, RN, FNP-BC

Education & Professional Development

Maya Joseph,
MSN, RN, CCRN-K

Kanan Bhatt,
MSN, RN, FNP

Membership

Marcy Kunnippampil,
MSN, RN, ANP-C, CEN

Grace Samuel,
MSN, RN, FNP-C, APN-C

Newsletter & Communications

Munira Wells,
PhD, RN

Tasneem Mohammedshah,
BSN, RN

Public Relations & Website

Premilla Mendonca,
MSN, RN, APN-C

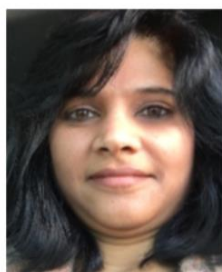
Smitha Paul,
MSN, RN

Installation Ceremony

The American Association of Indian Nurses – NJ2 (AAIN-NJ2) held its Installation of New Officers ceremony for the term 2021 - 2022 virtually! Congratulations to the new officers.



American Association of Indian Nurses-NJ2 2021-2022 EXECUTIVE BOARD



UMA VENUGOPAL
PRESIDENT



MOLLY JACOB
VICE PRESIDENT



SIBY VARUGHESE
SECRETARY



KAVITA NATARAJAN
TREASURER



2021-2022 Committee Chairs and Co-chairs



Rashmi Agarwal
Awards/ Scholarships



Merlin Mendonca
Awards/ Scholarships



Pushpa Abraham
APRN Forum



Violet Monis
APRN Forum



Grace Varghese
Cultural Affairs



Niti Patel
Cultural Affairs



Marcy Kunnipparampil
Membership



Grace Samuel
Membership



Munira Wells
Communication



Tasneem Mohammedshah
Communication



Maya Joseph
Education/ Prof Dev.



Kanan Bhatt
Education/ Prof Dev.



Premilla Mendonca
Public Relations



Smitha Paul
Public Relations



We are also fortunate to be supported by our Advisory Board.

2021-2022 Advisory Board



Lydia Albuquerque



Sandra Emmanuel



Rachel Koshy



Varsha Singh



Soffy Vilson



During the installation ceremony, AAIN-NJ2 members had the opportunity to participate in an excellent CEU activity: *Over a Cup of Tea, Journey of a Fulbright Scholar*. Dr. Elizabeth Simon, RN, PhD, ANP-BC, a veteran nurse with over 25 years of academic nursing experience and over 30 years of clinical experience, was the honorable speaker. She was a Fulbright-Nehru Academic Excellence Scholar during 2015-16 academic years. The goal of this presentation was to provide an in-depth discussion about the US-Fulbright Scholarship and Fulbright-Nehru Award for Academic excellence and thus help in motivating clinicians with appropriate credentials in the pursuit of this scholarly journey.



The occasion was marked with the awarding of one graduate and two undergraduate nursing scholarships, promoting excellence in nursing education.



Congratulations to the scholarship recipients



Sachin Patel- Graduate Scholarship

Varsha Thottananiyil- Undergraduate Scholarship

Alicia John- Undergraduate Scholarship



Thanks to all who attended!

GET TO KNOW THE TEAM

SPOTLIGHT ON....



President

Umamaheswari (Uma) Venugopal
MSN, RN, CCRN-K

Mrs. Venugopal has been inducted as the seventh



President of the American Association of Indian Nurses of New Jersey, Chapter 2 (AAIN-NJ2) for the term 2021-2022. With twenty plus years of experience in various areas including Critical Care, Administration and Education, Mrs.

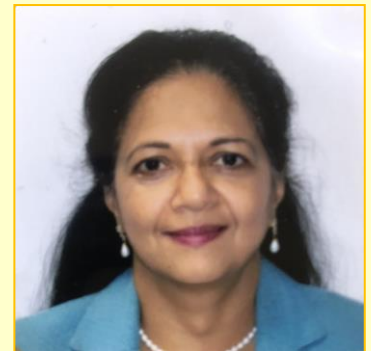
Venugopal exemplifies nursing excellence by incorporating transformational leadership into her practice, modeling the way to transform the health of our nation by inspiring and encouraging the fellow nurses to be the change agent. The primary goal during this term as the President of AAIN-NJ2 is to promote shared governance and to professional development among Indian Nurses through networking, collaboration and communication with other nursing organizations.

Mrs. Venugopal graduated from the Apollo Hospitals School of Nursing, Chennai, India and completed her Master's in Nursing Education in the United States. She currently serves as an Administrative Supervisor/Drug Diversion Lead-Nursing for Saint Peter's University Hospital, and is adjunct professor at William Paterson University (WPU) and Rowan College at Burlington County (RCBC). Mrs. Venugopal also serves on the Congress on Policy and Practice at New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA), is an active mentor for both the American Nurses Association mentorship program and the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. She was a finalist for the 2019 March of Dimes Awards and has been nominated for the 2020 CARES Award (Nursing Administration category).

Vice President

Molly Jacob
MSN, APN-C, CCRN

Ms. Jacob is a Board certified Adult Nurse practitioner, with 20 years of clinical experience in critical care/neurological nursing. She is currently the stroke coordinator at University Hospital.



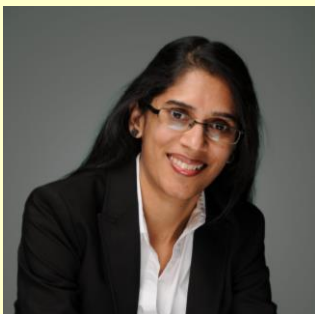
She is passionate about stroke care and is involved in several research projects, QI efforts and educational initiatives focusing on stroke care at the hospital, community and state levels. She received the Alan M Pederson award in 2008 for her excellence as a neocritical care APN. Ms. Jacob was actively involved in University Hospital's efforts at obtaining the Joint Commission certification as a Comprehensive Stroke Center in 2015 and recertification every two years. She is a member of NJ stroke coordinators consortium and has been a member of NJ DOH Stroke Advisory Panel since 2009. She has been invited to speak at local, state, national and international events, and has co-authored several articles on stroke and related topics.

As part of her commitment towards improving healthcare outcomes, Ms. Jacob has participated in mission trips to Ghana and Haiti with focus on health education and primary care. She also enjoys precepting nursing students.

Ms. Jacob has been involved in AAIN-NJ2 since its inception and has served as committee chair for different committees. This is her second consecutive term as Vice president for AAIN-NJ2.

Committee Chairs

Education and Professional Development 2021-2022



Maya Joseph
PhD. Candidate, RN,
CCRN-K
Jonas Scholar

Mrs. Joseph has close to 20 years of experience in critical care, nursing education and professional

development. She received her bachelor's degree from the School of Medical Education, Kerala, India and Master's in Nursing (Health Care Informatics) from Grand Canyon University, Arizona.

Mrs. Joseph is currently pursuing her Ph. D. in Nursing Science at Rutgers State University, New Jersey. Her scholarly activities include poster and podium presentations at local and national level, conducting peer reviews for journal articles, and participation in grant funded research projects. Mrs. Joseph brings her expertise from many years of professional development activities, leadership roles, community activities, and scholarly practice. Her deep interest in giving back to society and professional networking are the drive for her to continue being part of this organization.



Awards and Scholarships 2021-2022

Rashmi Aggarwal
MSN, APN



Mrs. Rashmi Aggarwal comes with over twenty-five years of comprehensive patient care experience, with multiple roles including Nurse

Practitioner, mentor, administrator and navigator. She has earned certifications in Wound Care, NICHE, Alzheimer's Support, Care Transitions, Leadership and Hospital Management.

Mrs. Aggarwal received her BSN from the Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (RAK) College of Nursing in India, her Master's Degree in Nursing (MSN) and Family Nurse

Practitioner (FNP) from D'Youville College & University of Buffalo in New York. She is enrolled in a Master's in Public Health Administration program.

She currently serves as AVP of Clinical Integration at Newark Beth Medical Center RWJ Barnabas Health, where she works on clinical programs to improve care coordination for high-risk populations. Mrs. Aggarwal feels passionately about health and community wellbeing and has collaborated with several community programs like care giver support, Matter of Balance and Take control of your health. Currently she is working on a program in partnership with Horizon to address the social determinants improve the lives of the population in Newark.

Mrs. Aggarwal is active in civic engagement at the local and state level. She is an active in Forum of Advance Practice Nurses, and Health Care Innovations projects. She serves on the Advisory Board at NJIT and at Greater Newark Coalition and the Health Care Quality Institute of New Jersey.



Membership 2021-2022 **Grace Samuel** **MSN, FNP-C, APN-C, RN**



Mrs. Grace Samuel has been involved with AAIN-NJ2 for the past 5 years, and is very pleased to serve as the Membership co-chair for the term 2021-2022.

Mrs. Samuel has more than 25 years of nursing experience in areas such as nephrology, Telemetry, and Critical Care. She is an APN, currently working with the Visiting Physician Services, making house calls to homebound patients. In recognition of her positive spirit, commitment to excellence and compassionate care, Mrs. Samuel was the recipient of The Spirit of the Heart Award in 2019 from the Visiting Physician Services.

She received her BSN from Thomas Edison State University, and Master's in Nursing as Family Nurse Practitioner from Felician University.

Mrs. Samuel is active in her church where she serves as a Sunday school teacher. She is the Ladies coordinator for the National Conference to be held in Oklahoma in 2022.

Special Honoree

NAINA
PRESIDENT



Dr. Lydia
Albuquerque

Dr. Lydia Albuquerque is the founding president of the American Association of Indian Nurses of America, New Jersey chapter (AAIN-NJ2) and has served in NAINA since its inception. She has taken many roles - Secretary, Advisory Board member, Election officer, and founding chair for the APN forum committee. We are very pleased that Dr. Albuquerque has been inducted as President of NAINA for 2021-2022. She serves with a strong determination and commitment to take this organization to a higher level. Dr. Albuquerque is a retired Indian army officer who places service before self and will do the same for NAINA.

Dr. Albuquerque has over three decades of experience in Nursing education, research and administration. She currently serves as an Assistant Professor at William Paterson University and is an acute care Nurse Practitioner at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, Barnabas health.

She also serves on the Publication Committee of the American Association of Heart failure Nurses, and is Vice President of Sigma Theta Tau International Iota chapter. Dr Albuquerque's accomplishments include induction to the Who's Who in American Nursing by the Society of Nursing in 2018, the DIVA award from the Institute for Nurses (IFN) and New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA), and being named a finalist for the March of Dimes Nurse of Year Award (academia category).

Did you know about these special accolades?

- ❖ *She served as a special duty nurse for the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, during the Commonwealth nations head of the governments meet in 1980*
- ❖ *She airlifted Mrs. Mugabe, wife of Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe for emergency dialysis to AIIMS, New Delhi*



Ladies in Red

Celebrating Valentine's Day and American Heart Month by wearing red at our monthly board meeting.



Heart Facts for 2021 - Did you know that cardiovascular disease is as Indian as masala Chai?

- Indians suffer disproportionately with heart disease and strokes compared to other populations.
- South Asian women have high rates of mortality from Coronary Artery Disease
- Early studies indicate that even a mild COVID-19 infection could cause myocardial damage.



In order to reduce your risk for heart disease, stay in the **RED**:

- R**: Rest and relaxation. Be sure to take time off from your busy schedule and sleep well. Daily meditation is a great way to ground yourself and recharge your batteries.
- E**: Energize through exercise. No gym? Try a free app like Fit On from the comfort of your home for workouts varying in length and intensity.
- D**: Dig into your veggies! Pick your carbs wisely and increase vegetable intake.

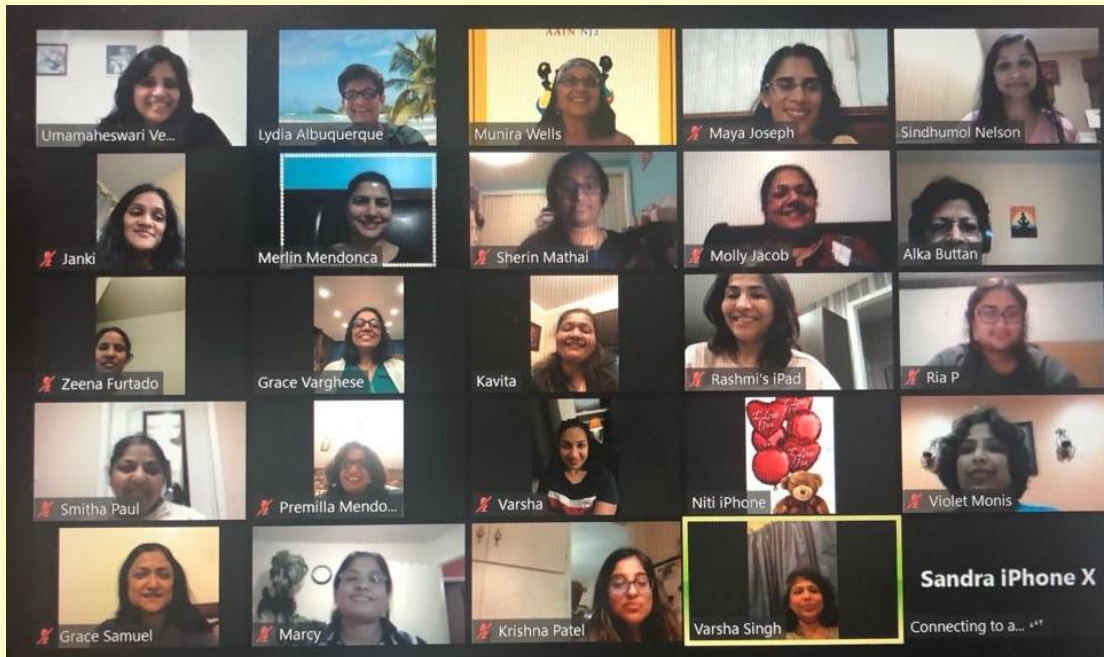
References:

South Asian Heart Center at El Camino Hospital: <https://www.southasianheartcenter.org/faqlist>

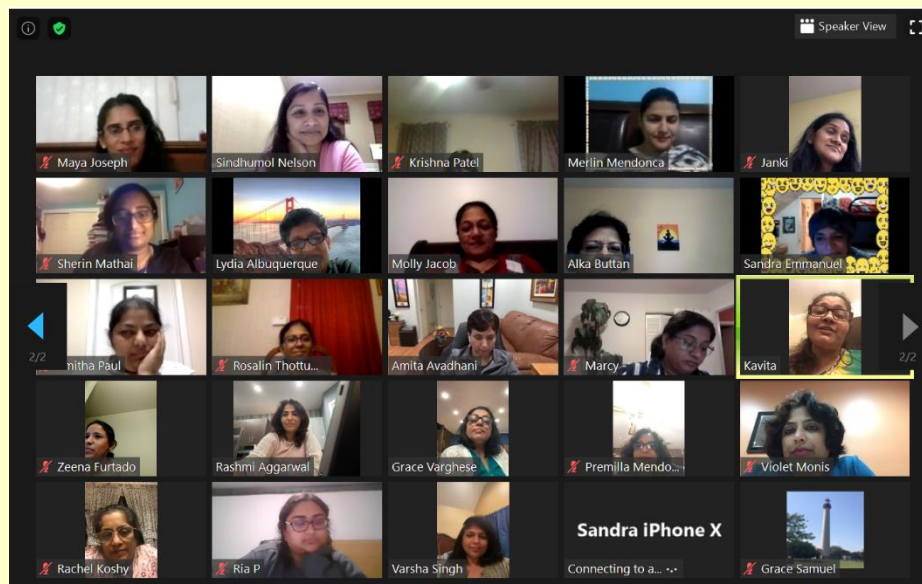
Puntmann VO, Carerj ML, Wieters I, et al. Outcomes of Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance Imaging in Patients Recently Recovered From Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). JAMA Cardiol. 2020;5(11):1265–1273. doi:10.1001/jamacardio.2020.3557

Chai & Charcha

...let's have a cup with friends



The Communications Team opened the year with a virtual Meet & Greet event on February 26 that we called "*Chai & Charcha with AAIN-NJ2*". This well attended event included long standing AAIN-NJ2 members as well as newcomers. We were particularly excited to see several students. There was fun conversation, time to get to know one another and even opportunity to ask for academic help! Our pre-licensure students connected with faculty members for NCLEX help and a graduate student was able to pick our brains for ideas on projects.



*Another cup,
anyone?*

AAIN-NJ2 SUPPORTS THE COVID-19 VACCINE



SHUTTERSTOCK 13007041877

As nurse scientists who believe in evidence-based practice, AAIN-NJ2 nurses support inoculation against the COVID-19 virus. Our nurses are on the forefront of receiving the vaccination. We are big shots, are you?



Pfizer BioNTech was the first vaccine to receive FDA approval for emergency use authorization (EUA) on December 11, 2020. It has 95% efficacy in preventing COVID-19 in people without prior infection.

*On December 18, 2020, the **Moderna** vaccine became the second vaccine to be approved by the FDA for EUA. It has similar efficacy as the Pfizer vaccine, although it may be slightly less effective in people who are 65 and older.*

*On February 27, 2021, the FDA approved the **Johnson & Johnson** vaccine for EUA. It has 86% efficacy in preventing severe disease in U.S.*

While the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use mRNA technology, the J & J vaccine is a carrier or virus vector vaccine, which makes it easier to store and requires only one shot.

How you can help:

1. Get any one of three approved vaccines in the US - Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson.
2. Help to develop the science by reporting your side effects. Register at vsafer.cdc.gov
3. Tell others the benefits of being vaccinated. If you are fully vaccinated, you can:
 - a. Meet indoors with other fully vaccinated people without a mask!
 - b. Meet indoors with one unvaccinated family
4. Be a role model: continue to wash hands – mask up –socially distance in public settings

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/keythingstoknow.html>
<https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/covid-19-vaccine-comparison>



While we celebrate ALL women on International Women's day, we would like to recognize a couple of our members for the following:



Congratulations to *Rashmi Aggarwal*, for being awarded a Healthcare Hero by The Consulate General of India NY & The Federation of Indian Associations NY-NJ-CT on International Women's Day!!!

Dr. Varsha Singh was invited to speak on EBC Radio on International Women's day and represent strong female leaders. Dr. Singh is also a host for TV Asia Telugu's *Healthline*, where she interviews a variety of experts on health related topics.



C.A.R.E.S. AWARD 2021

Two of our board members have been nominated for the 2021 CARES Awards.

- ❖ Administration Category:
 - *Uma Venugopal*, President, AAIN-NJ2
- ❖ Education category:
 - *Sandra Emmanuel*, Advisory Board (and Immediate Past-President, AAIN-NJ2)

A sincere congratulation to all our honorees!

*Would you like your accomplishments
recognized in our newsletter?*

Contact us at aainnj2newsletterchair@gmail.com

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN NURSES OF AMERICA



VIRTUAL LISTENING ROUNDS MEET EXECUTIVE & ADVISORY BOARD

Saturday, March 6th, 2021, 9pm EST
Saturday, March 13th, 2021, 9pm, EST
Saturday, March 20th, 2021, 9PM EST

Register At
<https://www.nainausa.org/virtual-rounding/>



*Register for NAINA's town hall meetings.
Get to know NAINA leaders and find out about our initiatives.*