Rooted in Strength *Maureen A Seckel, APRN, ACNS-BC, CCNS, CCRN, FCCM, FCNS*

My roots are similar to AACN’s growth and development.

AACN was formed in 1969 to meet the needs of nurses caring for patients in this new field of critical care nursing and the very first NTI was in New Orleans in 1974. I graduated with my BSN in nursing in 1978 and it was no surprise that I received little to no ICU education for this fairly new field of nursing. I became an ICU nurse in 1980 after enrolling in a hospital residency program in Seattle. My colleague told me about this new critical care exam (CCRN implemented in 1976) and that we should all be members of this association. I joined in 1982 and passed my first CCRN in 1983. I also passed my second in 1986 since I had not managed to keep track of my CE. It has not been a problem since then.

According to our AACN President Beth Wathen, *Today, nurses are at a threshold, at the cusp of a new and different world, one we can’t yet completely imagine*. I felt that way in 1980 at the start of my critical care career and it is even more true today. COVID-19 has derailed many of the tenants that I thought would always be there including staffing and equipment. I have seen staff in my unit frightened, angry, sad, and depressed but have admired their strength and perseverance in providing compassionate care for their patients, families, and maybe most important, each other. The poignant pictures of nurses holding the hand of a dying patient who was all alone in an isolation room were only too true. I wanted to use my skill sets to not only be there for patients but also for nurses and my other colleagues in my unit. I took back part of my job in 2020 that I had left to do whatever I could to help support and walk a little in their shoes.

I had the opportunity to help with the development of AACN COVID-19 micro credentialling. We implemented awake self-prone positioning at my facility but also worked with our team to publish. Evidence based practice is a passion of mine and I believe that it is also the roots of our strength and will help to move us forward. COVID-19 has moved the threshold and I expect and know, that AACN and Diamond State Chapter will also be there. I am excited to be a part of the Diamond State Chapter that celebrates our Delaware nurses.

*Nurses are rooted in strength, forged in fire, and growing in power.*

*Rooted in Strength we create our new path forward as leaders in healthcare.*

*Beth Wathen, AACN President*

