



SNOOZE NEWS

TAPAN UPPER GULF COAST REGION NEWSLETTER



PASSION AND EXCELLENCE: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 44TH NATIONAL ASPAN CONFERENCE IN DALLAS, TEXAS

The 44th National ASPAN Conference celebrated Perianesthesia nursing excellence through awards, insightful sessions, innovative ideas, and uplifting keynote speeches.

[Read More
\(Page 9\)](#)



UGCR SUCCESSFULLY HOSTS 2025 ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE, SPOTLIGHTING ADVANCES IN PERIANESTHESIA SAFETY

UGCR'S Annual Spring Conference brought together 113 participants for a day of expert-led education and collaboration.

[Read More
\(Page 5\)](#)



IN THIS ISSUE

From the President's Desk	<u>3</u>
Editorial	<u>4</u>
2025 Annual UGCR Spring Conference	<u>5</u>
2025 Nurse Day at the Capitol, Advocating for Perianesthesia Nursing	<u>6</u>
Virtual Mini-Symposium	<u>7</u>
Insights and Innovations: Highlights from the Virtual Mini-symposium	<u>8</u>
Passion and Excellence: Highlights from the 44th National ASPAN Conference in Dallas	<u>9</u>
Inspiring Moments at ASPAN National Conference	<u>10</u>
Reflections from ASPAN Conference	<u>10</u>
Passion and Excellence, Growing, Learning and Leading Together	<u>11</u>
Impressions on ASPAN 2025: A First-time Experience Worth Sharing	<u>12</u>
"Ta Da" I Did it!!! I Attended My Very First Nursing Conference	<u>13</u>
Stepping Into Aspiration: My First Experience at the 44th ASPAN National Conference	<u>14</u>
Cinical Practice Corner: " Navigating Cannabis Use in the PeriAnesthesia Setting"	<u>16</u>
Updates from the Board	<u>18</u>
Community Outreach	<u>19</u>
Certification Corner ; Upcoming Events; and Membership Matters	<u>20-22</u>

EDITORIAL TEAM



**Eric F. Pazziuagan, MSN, MAN,
CMSRN, NI-BC, CPAN**
Newsletter Editor



**Geraldine delos Santos,
MSN, RN, CPAN**



**Candace Miller,
MSN-Ed, RN, CPAN, CAPA**



**Alma Pope,
BSN, RN, CPAN**

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



SPRINGING FORWARD WITH TAPAN UGCR: GROWTH, EXCELLENCE, AND COMMUNITY

Candace Miller, MSN-Ed, RN, CPAN, CAPA
TAPAN UGCR Board President 2024-2026

Greetings!!

I hope everyone in greater Houston is doing their best to enjoy spring amidst this “summer” weather! When I think about Spring, I think about newness, anticipation of things to come, and I stand in awe of the blossoming of new life around me! So, it’s no surprise that I also am viewing our UGCR component of TAPAN through that same lens during this season.

The *newness* is watching our UGCR board come into its own with our planning and execution of our events, such as our Spring Virtual Mini Symposium held in April 2025. All of the speakers were from within our TAPAN component and they all delivered exceptionally as proven by the wonderful reviews that we received through survey as well as the personal calls and texts that came through.

The *anticipation of things to come* includes seeing our State Board, many of which are UGCR members, working on planning exceptional events such as a new Certification Review Course and our upcoming State Conference! The time, attention to detail, and collaboration that is happening is a reflection of the confidence and expertise that is housed within our organization.

Lastly, the *blossoming of life* includes the presence of our UGCR members at our National Conference as volunteers, poster presenters, and receiving excellence in clinical practice awards! The networking and comraderie with all of the members across the state of Texas as well as interstate was amazing to experience. TAPAN as a whole is a leader within ASPAN and with talented and compassionate individuals like our members, that legacy will stay in tact for years to come.

So as we continue to execute the vision that we set forth for this year, please consider TAPAN UGCR as a place where you can not only learn, but grow your individual talents and abilities, meet new people who share your commitment to excellence, and reinvigorate your practice. Visit the website regularly for new on upcoming events, and contact us with any questions that you may have. Let’s spring forward together!



EDITORIAL



THE HEALING GRACE OF SPRING: FINDING RENEWAL AMID LIFE'S HUSTLE

Eric F. Pazziuagan, MSN, MAN, RN, CMSRN, NI-BC, CPAN
Newsletter Editor

One of my favorite moments in life was when I was watching the cherry blossoms fall, doing nothing in particular. It was a healing moment for me, and every second is truly magical and beautiful. This happened last April during my three-week vacation in Japan. My intention is not to be a tourist, but rather to be a traveller who truly enjoys every minute of my vacation time, without rushing to see the touristy spots all at once. I even themed my vacation this year as "Hanami," a term used by the Japanese to describe "flower viewing" or viewing the cherry blossoms. During the "Sakura Season," it is common for the Japanese people to go to different parks for picnics while enjoying the cherry blossoms. I have seen many families and friends enjoy each other's company and worry about nothing. I realized that this time is also a time of relaxation and healing for everyone.

These moments of grace reminded me that spring indeed is a time of healing and renewal. Spring is a time of the year when nature bursts into life from its long slumber. Everything is colorful and bright, as if nature is telling us that it is "good to be alive" and "life is really beautiful."

As perianesthesia nurses, we are often caught up in our never-ending work routine. We always see the worst in people and are there in their vulnerable states. Pain and suffering are always around us. Sometimes, emotions can be rough, and colleagues can be challenging. All of these effects us eventually without even realizing it. It is not uncommon for nurses to be emotionally drained or burned out from their daily work.

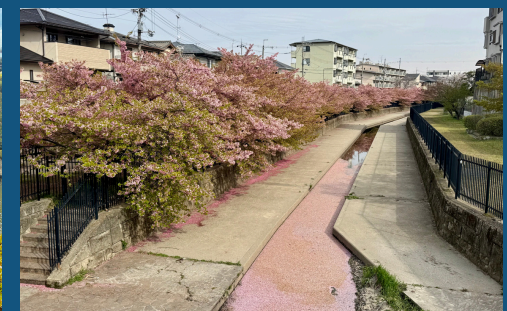
May the spring season serve as a reminder for us to step back, relax, and nurture ourselves. Take some time off and engage in an activity that will help you heal and renew. It does not need to be grand. You can walk in a park while smelling the flowers around you, or go to a spa and engage in a relaxing massage. Think of something that you can really enjoy while stepping back from the hustles and bustles of our daily life. After all, an effective healer can truly be effective if she is fully healed herself.



Himeji Castle surrounded by vibrant spring flowers and blooming cherry blossoms.



The author enjoying "hanami" at Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden in Tokyo, Japan.



A canal adorned with cherry trees in Yodokizuchō, Kyoto, Japan. Observe how the water has transformed into a beautiful shade of pink due to the abundance of cherry blossoms.



Participants are completely engaged, attentively listening to the speaker throughout one of the sessions.



With bright smiles, UGCR officers and Spring Conference organizers happily take a moment to pose for the camera.



Participants at the conference enthusiastically wandered through the diverse booths showcased during the event.



Participants from Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Medical Center are radiating joy as they pose for the cameras.

*Photos Courtesy of: Eric Pazziuagan, Geraldine delos Santos, and Candace Miller

TAPAN-UGCR HOSTS SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE, SPOTLIGHTING ADVANCES IN PERIANESTHESIA SAFETY

The Texas Association of PeriAnesthesia Nurses – Upper Gulf Coast Region (TAPAN-UGCR) celebrated a resounding success at its annual Spring Conference, held on February 15, 2025. This year's event, themed "Protecting Your Perianesthesia Practice – Safety Starts with You," drew a strong turnout of 113 passionate healthcare professionals committed to advancing safety standards and excellence in perianesthesia care.

Graciously hosted by Houston Methodist–Texas Medical Center (TMC), the conference provided an enriching day filled with expert-led sessions, collaborative workshops, and critical discussions focused on fostering safety culture within perianesthesia settings. The esteemed venue not only provided a state-of-the-art environment but also reflected the high standards that perianesthesia professionals strive to uphold in their daily practice.

Keynote presentations, panel discussions, and interactive breakout sessions emphasized personal accountability, communication strategies, and innovative solutions to ensure patient and provider safety. Attendees praised the conference for its timely and relevant content, citing it as an essential platform for networking and professional growth.

"We are thrilled by the incredible turnout and the level of engagement from all participants," said a TAPAN-UGCR representative. "The theme this year resonated strongly with our members. Safety in perianesthesia care truly begins with each one of us, and it was inspiring to see so many professionals united by this mission."

In addition to its educational offerings, the conference served as a vibrant gathering for perianesthesia nurses to connect, share experiences, and renew their commitment to excellence in patient care.

TAPAN-UGCR extends its deepest gratitude to Houston Methodist–TMC for their generous hospitality and support, and to all the speakers, volunteers, and attendees who contributed to making the event a meaningful and memorable experience.

As the organization looks forward to its future events, TAPAN-UGCR remains dedicated to empowering perianesthesia professionals through continued education, advocacy, and collaboration – always with safety as the cornerstone.



(L-R) Lynette Alcorn, Geraldine delos Santos, Frances Garza, Patty Charles, & Felicia Selman.



Texas Nursing Association delegates pose at the steps of the Capitol in Austin, Texas.

UGCR SHOWS STRONG PRESENCE AT 2025 NURSE DAY AT THE CAPITOL, ADVOCATING FOR PERIANESTHESIA NURSING

Frances Garza, BSN, RN, CPN

Empowering Nurses: My Experience at Texas Nurse Day at the Capitol

This year, I had the incredible opportunity to attend Texas Nurses Day at the Capitol, where nurses, nursing students, and advocates gathered in Austin to engage with state legislators on critical healthcare issues. It was a chance to not only learn about the legislative process but also advocate for policies that directly affect our profession and patient care.

During the event, I focused on advocating for three key issues: safe staffing, preventing the criminalization of medical errors, and supporting vaccine efforts. These issues are central to improving both patient safety and the quality of care we provide. I had the privilege of meeting with my state legislator, Molly Cook, an ER nurse when not in session, and we discussed bills aimed at improving patient safety and preventing unjust criminalization of medical errors. It was eye-opening to realize how much influence we, as nurses, can have in the legislative process.

One thing that stood out was the overwhelming support for patient safety and advocacy. It reinforced the importance of our voices in shaping healthcare policy, not just at the bedside but in legislative chambers as well.

This experience has inspired me to continue advocating for the nursing profession and patient safety. Nurses truly do have a voice, and it's vital that we use it to create meaningful change.

UGCR CONDUCTS A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL MINI-SYMPOSIUM

The Upper Gulf Coast Region (UGCR) of the Texas Association of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (TAPAN) proudly hosted a highly successful Spring Virtual Mini-Symposium on April 12, 2025, bringing together 141 perianesthesia nurses from across the region. Held via Zoom, the virtual format allowed for wide accessibility and participation, creating an engaging and educational experience for all attendees.

This year's symposium offered three Continuing Education (CE) units and featured a compelling lineup of topics carefully curated to address emerging challenges and essential skills in modern perianesthesia practice. The presentations provided attendees with evidence-based insights and practical strategies for navigating complex patient needs and professional dynamics.

The featured sessions included:

- Perianesthesia Implications for Patients Taking Cannabis and Cannabinoids – A timely discussion that addressed the pharmacologic and perioperative considerations for patients using medical or recreational cannabis products.
- Caring for Patients with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Sensory Processing Disorder – This session explored best practices for creating supportive, patient-centered care environments that accommodate sensory sensitivities and communication needs.
- Conflict Management in the Charge Nurse Role – Focused on leadership and interpersonal skills, this session equipped charge nurses with tools to effectively manage conflict, foster teamwork, and maintain a positive clinical environment.

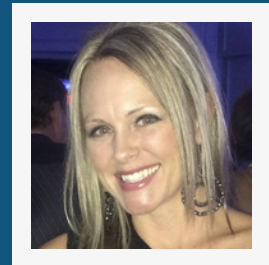
Participants praised the virtual symposium for its relevant content, engaging speakers, and the convenience of attending from their home or workplace. The sessions sparked thoughtful dialogue and reflection, with many nurses expressing appreciation for the practical takeaways they could immediately apply in their daily roles.

The UGCR extends heartfelt thanks to the presenters, organizers, and all attendees for making the virtual mini-symposium a success. As TAPAN-UGCR continues its mission to support excellence in perianesthesia care, events like this reaffirm the importance of ongoing education, collaboration, and professional growth.



These are some of the participants who attended the virtual mini-symposium.

INSIGHTS AND INNOVATIONS: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SPRING VIRTUAL MINI-SYMPOSIUM



Shelby Peterson, BSN, RN

We held our Spring Virtual Mini-symposium on Saturday, April 12th, from 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. This was a free event for both ASPAN and TAPAN members and non-members, and we earned three contact hours. We had 114 participants for this event, and it proceeded smoothly. During this symposium, we held one of our business meetings to keep all our members informed about the current status of our organization.

We had three excellent presenters.

- Britini Hoiem had an excellent presentation on “The Hazy Reality”. Yes, it is what you think it is – Perioperative considerations for patients on Cannabis and Cannabinoids. She spoke about how it affects the patient down to a cellular level. She discussed the body systems and how the body is affected when substances are inhaled or consumed, including how it can cause Cannabinoid Hyperemesis syndrome. Our biggest challenge appears to be that this is not often readily discussed by the patient in the pre-operative setting, particularly if they are using this. She discussed how this can be an issue in the postoperative setting in controlling pain or nausea. This contributes to a multimodal approach to pain management. The prevalence of use has continued to increase, and she spoke of the legality of it. This is ever-changing, as we can all see if we watch the news.
- Geraldine delos Santos and Giovaana Trainor delivered a passionate presentation on Coordinating care for patients with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Sensory Processing Disorder. They spoke about how ASD is the fastest-growing developmental disability in the US. We watched a video on what it may be like to be patient with sensory processing disorder. What we may see as usual everyday life is not the case with them. They have an overload of information, and it affects them. Memorial Hermann has an assessment tool in Epic called SNAP – Special Needs Assessment and Plan. If they have a patient who meets these criteria, they fill out the assessment tool. The entire surgical team has access to this and can view it before seeing the patient. They can see what positively or negatively affects the patient and can work with them and their family. Hopefully, this will take hold, and other hospitals will start using it.
- Candace Miller had a very informative presentation on Leadership principles, conflict management in charge nursing. She discussed the different stages of conflict and our responses to it. If you continue to let disputes go unresolved, they will continue to impact team dynamics negatively. It was discussed that when you are a charge nurse, you are held to a higher standard, and if you need guidance on something, it is not wise to discuss it with the staff. Instead, you should discuss it with other charge nurses or the managers. Documentation is key in conflict resolution, and it is okay to disagree as long as we remain professional and have mutual respect.

Overall, this was a huge success. We were able to accommodate members who may not have been able to attend an in-person event in the past, but were able to participate in the virtual event. I give it two thumbs up!



PASSION AND EXCELLENCE: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 44TH NATIONAL ASPAN CONFERENCE IN DALLAS, TEXAS

Alma Pope, RN, BSN, CPAN

From April 28 to May 1, I attended the 44th National ASPAN Conference at the Sheraton in Dallas, Texas, where the theme "Passion and Excellence: Growing, Learning, and Leading Together" captured the energy and commitment of PeriAnesthesia nurses nationwide.

The conference kicked off with the ASPAN Business Meeting and Awards Ceremony, where TAPAN was honored with multiple awards, including People's Choice, Best Newsletter Over 15 Pages, culminating in the prestigious Gold Leaf Award for Component of the Year. It was an incredibly meaningful moment to see our state's dedication and excellence recognized on a national stage.

These achievements reflect the countless hours of hard work, collaboration, and passion that many of our board members invested in the application process and in strengthening our component throughout the year.

The keynote speaker, Jeff Zeff, set an energetic tone with his talk, "The Spirit of Ta Da." He reminded us to remain flexible and supportive as we navigate our ever-changing profession. His humor and wisdom resonated with everyone in the room.

I attended sessions on *"Pre and Post Surgical Priorities for Spinal Procedures," "Interventional Pain Procedures," "Prevention of PONV," "Enhancing Handoffs," "Breathing Complications," "Virtual PAT," and an Emergency Simulation"*, all of which were directly relevant to my work at my orthopedic surgical hospital. These sessions provided actionable insights to improve patient care and streamline processes in our facility. I'm also excited to explore the use of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), to streamline time-consuming tasks, improve outcomes, and enhance communication with our patients.

A highlight of the conference was the Poster Presentations, which showcased peer research and quality improvement projects at hospitals nationwide. These presentations fostered collaboration and provided fresh, evidence-based ideas that I look forward to implementing.

To meaningfully close the conference, Scott Friedman delivered an uplifting address focused on gratitude and positivity. As a gesture of appreciation for the dedication of peri-anesthesia nurses, he gifted eBooks to those in attendance.

Next year, the 45th National ASPAN Conference will be held in San Francisco, CA. This is a fantastic opportunity for anyone looking to expand their knowledge, connect with peers, and reignite their passion for PeriAnesthesia nursing.



Britini Hoiem is one of the ASPAN 2025 Above and Beyond Service Recognition Award Winners.



TAPAN UGCR delegates for the ASPAN National Conference.



Felicia Selman is the 2025 Award Winner for Outstanding Achievement.



INSPIRING MOMENTS AT ASPAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE

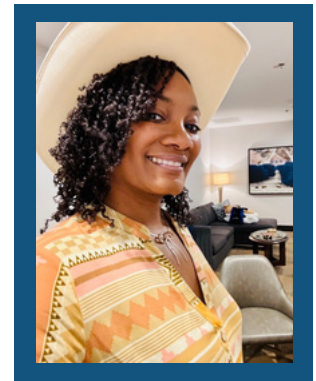
Jacqueline Hawk-Cotten, MSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA

It was such a pleasure attending the recent National Conference for the American Society of Perianesthesia Nurses (ASPN). The Conference was filled with valuable educational sessions, networking opportunities, and moments of inspiration. Among the many highlights, the Certification luncheon stood out, mainly due to the presence of a truly remarkable speaker: John O'Leary. Those fortunate enough to attend the luncheon were treated to an incredibly motivational and impactful presentation by Mr. O'Leary. His message resonated deeply with the audience, leaving many feeling energized and inspired in their vital roles as perianesthesia nurses. Mr. O'Leary's ability to connect with the audience and deliver a message of resilience and purpose was genuinely remarkable.

The ASPAN National Conference remains a vital platform for professional growth and connection within our community. I left feeling re-energized and grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such a dedicated group of nurses. I sincerely hope that those who have not had the opportunity will be able to attend a future ASPAN National Conference.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE ASPAN CONFERENCE

Candace Miller, MSN-Ed, RN, CPAN, CAPA



I genuinely get excited for national conference time for several reasons. It is a time of seeing old friends, a time of learning, and a time of reflecting on my practice and professional growth. However, this year, returning to my hometown of Dallas, Texas, as both a volunteer and attendee has reaffirmed for me the importance and greatness of this yearly gathering.

I watched as young nurses in our profession absorbed the teachings from doctorally prepared nurses. I saw the role of the nursing educator front and center whereas ten years ago when I became an educator, I would have never thought that was possible. I heard the topic of workplace bullying and incivility being discussed openly amongst strangers united by their love of Peri-Anesthesia Nursing and a desire to end toxicity in the workplace. I saw friendships form instantly and bonds deepen over our shared struggles and our optimism for changing the future.

Lynette Alcorn and the entire TAPAN North and East team outdid themselves in providing an inclusive environment where we could all pause, ponder, learn, grow, change, and champion the causes that matter most to us. So now that we are all back home and our "boots are really on the ground", I am inspired to carry on the lessons learned and look forward to when we all meet again in San Francisco!



PASSION AND EXCELLENCE, GROWING, LEARNING AND LEADING TOGETHER

Sheila Anthony BSN, RN CPAN, CAPA, CCRN-K

This year's National Conference was both inspiring and energizing. It's so awesome to have networked with fellow nurses from across the country. From the moment the conference started, the atmosphere was charged with enthusiasm, collaboration, and a shared commitment to nursing excellence. Warm greetings and excitement were all around.

The conference commenced with an opening ceremony led by our ASPAN President, who acknowledged all the accomplishments of ASPAN over the last year. She presented various national awards. TAPAN won the Gold Leaf Award, Shining Star Award, and The Newsletter Award, and Felicia Selman received the Outstanding Achievement Award. What an exciting time for TAPAN and a proud moment to be a TAPAN member. The keynote speaker was excellent. Full of laughter and what team building games he taught; what a way to start the day.

From the registration process to the various educational sessions presented, the days were filled with activity and well organized. The planned registered session is indeed a great process. The sessions were so interesting that it would have been hard to select which to attend on the day. Experts from around the country and Canada delivered presentations on subjects such as pain management, anesthesia techniques, patient safety, incivility, and bullying, among others. These sessions were both informative and interactive, enabling nurses to partake in meaningful discussions and share their professional experiences. One of my favorite sessions was Discharge with Responsible Adult: We Have Always Done It That Way. This prompted consideration of tools to manage these types of patient situations better. From the medication sessions, I was impressed with the presentation, 'Continuous IV Ketamine Infusion in Conjunction with Ultra-Low Naloxone Infusion to Decrease Narcotics in Phase I.' The implementation of a Virtual Recovery After Surgery Program in Peri-anesthesia was of great interest, and its impact on patients' successful recoveries with minimal post-surgery ER visits stood out.

The most enjoyable part was networking with our TAPAN members and acknowledging their roles and contributions. From sharing professional insights to building lasting connections, the networking sessions provided a platform for meaningful interactions and exchanges. It was truly gratifying to see the dedication and passion of fellow TAPAN members and to learn from their diverse expertise and experiences.

A special note of thanks goes out to the numerous vendors who played a significant role in the conference by showcasing their innovative products and technologies. Their collaboration and support were instrumental in enhancing our overall experience. The vendor exhibits provided a valuable opportunity for nurses to explore the latest advancements in medical equipment, pain management solutions, and patient care technologies. This interaction not only fostered professional growth but also highlighted the importance of integrating cutting-edge tools into clinical practice. Connected with several vendors to visit our facility with their products.

Among the most engaging aspects of the conference were the poster presentations. These visual displays highlighted numerous positive process changes and evidence-based projects, showcasing the innovative spirit of the nursing community. These poster presentations provided an excellent platform for nurses to showcase their hard work and dedication to improving healthcare outcomes, while also encouraging attendees to implement these positive changes in their work settings. I loved the ESCAPE Room Competency Check Off Process, along with using Simulations as learning tools. We can implement and increase the team's learning engagement in a fun way.

The Conference was a huge success; I left the conference inspired and empowered. It was a celebration of the expertise, innovation, and compassion that define the peri-anesthesia nursing community. The uplifting atmosphere and wealth of information shared left a lasting impression on all who attended. A huge thank you to the planning committee for a job well done on an engaging, joyous, and prosperous conference. Counting the days down to attend next year's conference.

IMPRESSIONS ON ASPAN 2025: A FIRST-TIME EXPERIENCE WORTH SHARING

Britini Hoen, BSN, RN, WCC, CAPA, CPAN



I had the privilege of attending my first ASPAN National Conference, which absolutely exceeded my expectations. As a UGCR member, I found it both energizing and eye-opening to join PeriAnesthesia professionals from across the country and abroad, who share a common drive to improve care, advocate for safety, and advance our specialty.

One of the best parts of the experience was spending time with fellow Texas nurses. From casual hallway conversations to in-depth discussions over a shared meal, I gained a deeper understanding of how various facilities manage their units. There's always something to learn from others' perspectives—and sharing ideas with our TAPAN colleagues reinforced just how innovative and passionate our Texas nurses are.

Several sessions left a lasting impression. One, in particular, focused on waste anesthetic gases (WAGs) and the growing awareness of their occupational impact in recovery areas. I appreciated how the presenters linked clinical data with environmental design, offering strategies to reduce staff exposure and encouraging us to educate ourselves and to bring these concerns to leadership and facilities teams.

I also attended a session on artificial intelligence in pre-anesthesia workflows, a topic I hadn't considered much before. It was exciting to see how AI is already being used to streamline clerical tasks and documentation, allowing nurses to focus more on clinical judgment and patient interaction.

One particularly memorable session featured Dr. Michael Ramsay, the developer of the Ramsay Sedation Scale, speaking on PACU safety. While his name may not be instantly recognizable to everyone, the tool he created is widely used in sedation assessment, making it especially interesting to hear directly from its originator. Dr. Ramsay also emphasized the importance of integrating technology into patient monitoring to prevent adverse outcomes, highlighting how advancements in monitoring tools can enhance patient safety in the PACU.

Of course, one of the most exciting parts for me personally was seeing so many TAPAN members honored for their incredible contributions. Our region and state were well-represented, and it made me even prouder to be part of this organization.

As a first-time attendee, I left the conference feeling motivated, informed, and grateful—not only for the education, but also for the relationships and inspiration I took home with me. More than anything, this experience reminded me of the importance of staying connected, inspired, and engaged with others who share a common mission. The professional relationships, ideas, and encouragement I gained will stay with me long after the conference ended. I'm already counting down to San Francisco in 2026!

"TA DA" I DID IT!!! I ATTENDED MY VERY FIRST NURSING CONFERENCE

Cherry Burford, BSN, RN, CVRN-I, CPAN

The opening ceremony of the 44th Annual ASPAN conference, with keynote speaker Joel Zeff, had me on the edge of my seat with non-stop laughter. He was pure entertainment and engaged the crowd more than I have ever experienced during any comedy show. He asked for volunteers from the crowd to help perform three acting games, and they all did a fantastic job with everyone's help. He gave me an inspiring impression of how encouragement goes a long way. As nurses, we go through our workdays going through the motions without truly understanding the emotions that can make our dream of being a productive team a reality. He would mention that anything positive or to uplift someone's spirits should be like "TA DA," as if you had done it, great job, awesome. Throughout the conference, I met people from all over the United States who shared their experiences as PACU nurses, expressed their concerns, and provided support and solution ideas to one another. When one would tell their story, one would go "TA DA" and we would all laugh it out. It was great to have that relief of stress turn into a burst of laughter.



TAPAN/ UGCR members during the ASPAN National Conference.

It was TAPAN's year at the 44th ASPAN Conference, winning the Gold Leaf Award 2024, People's Newsletter Choice Award, and members of the TAPAN association winning Clinical Practice Excellence Award to Agnes, Outstanding Achievement to Felicia, Recruiter of the Year to Lynette. I am very proud to be part of an association that works hard throughout its clinical practice. I hope to learn from these extraordinary ladies and achieve these goals in my nursing career. I am currently a SME (subject matter expert) for ABPANC's professional development, creating educational materials to help fellow peers become successful in gaining their nursing certification in CPAN/CAPA.

My longtime friend and work bestie, Michelle Hughes, and I attended the CPAN/CAPA luncheon, where a keynote speaker shared a miracle life-changing story that had everyone in tears. John O Leary's "On Fire" is his true life story of events that he endured as a nine-year-old boy playing with fire gone bad, causing 100% of his body to be burned. His journey was marked by being surrounded by people who never gave up on him, providing him with hope, encouragement, and the strength to fight for his life. Wow, just writing that last sentence almost put me in tears again. His story is truly what he says is an "absolute miracle." What is even more inspiring is that, despite losing the functionality of his hands, doctors and physical therapists were able to restore his hands, and he learned to play the piano beautifully. Words cannot describe how he played magically but what I can tell you is looking around the room, more tears of joy and happiness on all men and women's faces seeing this boy grown into man who overcame his obstacles all because of the people who cared for him all believed he will live and overcome this. He sure did and showed the listeners, us nurses, how strong one's actions in the care we provide can truly make a difference in someone's life.

The opening ceremony, key speakers, entertainment, poster presentations, conference speakers, and networking with numerous nurses from across the U.S. were a fantastic experience. I have truly learned a lot, and I plan to share this knowledge with my PACU staff at Houston Methodist West. The impact of "sharing is knowledge" can make our staff and patient care experience top-notch.

STEPPING INTO INSPIRATION: MY FIRST EXPERIENCE AT THE 44TH ASPAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Michelle Hughes, BSN, RN, CPAN

Attending the 44th ASPAN National Conference for the first time was nothing short of transformative. As a perianesthesia nurse stepping into this vibrant professional gathering, I felt both excitement and curiosity about what was ahead. The theme of this year's conference—"Passion and Excellence: Growing, Learning and Leading Together"—couldn't have been more fitting.

From the moment I arrived, I was struck by the sense of community. Over 2,000 nurses from across the country came together in a shared mission: to grow, learn, and support each other. Walking into the keynote session, I could feel the energy in the room. The opening address by Joel Zeff delivered a powerful message about resilience, leadership, and the evolving landscape of nursing. It reminded me that we are part of a profession that continuously adapts and thrives—even in the face of adversity.



Cherry Burford (L) and Michelle Hughes (R) during the ASPAN National Conference.



TAPAN wins the 2024 Gold Leaf Award.



Shay Glevy presented the 2024 Gold Leaf Award to TAPAN's Patty Charles and Geraldine delos Santos.

What stood out most during the conference were the educational sessions and the CPAN/CAPA luncheon I attended alongside one of my best friends and work colleagues, Cherry Burford. Topics ranged from enhanced recovery protocols and pharmacologic updates to emotional resilience in nursing practice. I found myself scribbling notes, taking pictures of slides, and feeling truly engaged. It was refreshing to hear evidence-based content delivered with passion and real-world application. John O Leary's keynote speaker for the luncheon of his actual life story "On Fire" left everyone in tears, but also inspired by what a difference we can make in a person's life that goes beyond just the time we have with them.

Networking was another highlight. Whether in breakout sessions, vendor exhibits, or informal lunch conversations, I met nurses from a variety of settings—pre-op, PACU, ambulatory, and beyond and building relationships with nurses from other states. Hearing their stories and best practices were inspiring and reaffirmed that we're all navigating similar challenges, just in different places.

I also appreciated the recognition of excellence within our field. The awards ceremony honored nurses who have gone above and beyond in education, clinical leadership, and patient advocacy. TAPAN was honored by winning the Gold Leaf Award, along with the People's Newsletter Choice Award, Clinical Practice Excellence Award, and Outstanding Achievement Award. It was a moving reminder of the impact we have not just in our units, but on the broader scope of healthcare. I am currently on the ABPANC's marketing and awards committee.

As a first-time attendee, I left the ASPAN Conference feeling recharged and proud to be a perianesthesia nurse. I brought back new knowledge, fresh ideas for unit improvement, and a deeper appreciation for the future of our profession that I will be able to share in my future travels. If you've never attended, I wholeheartedly encourage you to consider it next year. It's more than a conference—it's a celebration of who we are and who we're becoming.

CLINICAL PRACTICE CORNER



NAVIGATING CANNABIS USE IN THE PERIANESTHESIA SETTING

Britini Hoien, MSN, RN, WCC, CAPA, CPAN

Cannabis and cannabinoid use are rapidly increasing across the U.S., with over 61 million Americans reporting use in 2023—more than three times the number who misuse opioids (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2024). As perianesthesia nurses, we are increasingly responsible for caring for patients whose cannabis use may significantly affect their surgical experience, from induction to recovery. Understanding these effects is crucial for delivering safe, personalized care.

Cannabis impacts multiple systems in the body. Tachycardia and dysrhythmias are the most common cardiovascular effects you may observe in this patient population. Respiratory effects—such as airway hyperreactivity, wheezing, and bronchitis—can resemble those seen in tobacco users and may increase perioperative risk (Shah et al., 2023). Gastrointestinal symptoms are also notable, with a 20% increased risk of postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV) and a tendency toward heightened pain perception. Many cannabis users require higher opioid doses due to tolerance, underscoring the need for multimodal analgesia (Ladha et al., 2021).

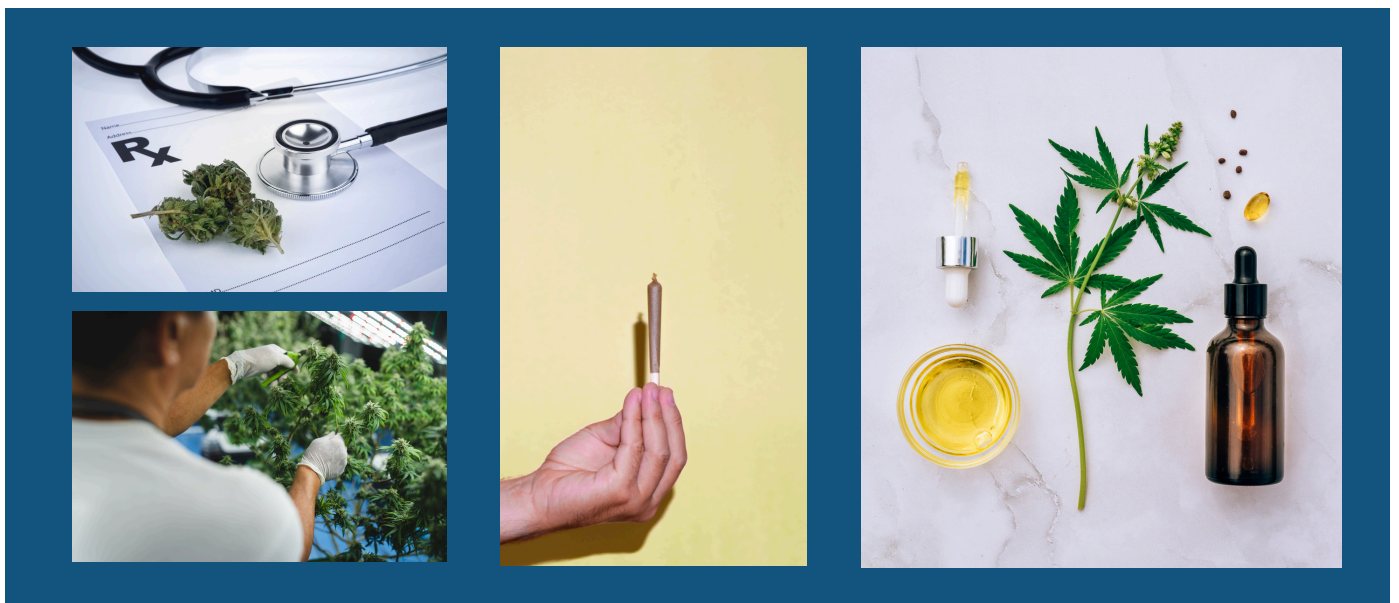
Preoperative screening is a key nursing responsibility. Patients are far more likely to disclose cannabis use when approached in a neutral, nonjudgmental way. Key questions should address frequency, form, chronicity, and timing of last use. Thorough documentation enables the care team to anticipate increased anesthetic and analgesic requirements and to proactively address PONV.

The American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine (ASRA) provides consensus guidelines for managing perioperative patients using cannabis and cannabinoids. These guidelines specifically recommend several practices that perianesthesia nurses are well positioned to lead—such as communicating known cannabis use to the anesthesia team so that care can be personalized and optimized, advocating for regional anesthesia when appropriate, and initiating multimodal pain strategies early ([Shah et al., 2023](#)).

Ultimately, perianesthesia nurses are in a unique position to advocate for tailored, evidence-based care and to educate patients about what to expect. By helping patients understand that cannabis use may increase their risk of postoperative pain and nausea, we can reduce fear and uncertainty, especially when symptoms arise. As access to cannabis continues to expand, our roles in screening, educating, and coordinating safe, individualized care will only become more important.

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UPDATES FROM THE BOARD

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Candace Miller, MSN-Ed, RN, CPAN, CAPA



Our Regional Board Meetings enable us to track key metrics, ensuring the health and growth of our component. This also aids in the development of new services for our members, as well as helps us in sustainability for future executive boards. Below is a snapshot of how things are going throughout the first 6 months of this year (January 2025 to present):

- Executive Board Meetings: Monthly, on the first Monday of every month!
 - Vacant Board Position: 3rd Vice President
- Current TAPAN UGCR Membership: 507 active members
- Frequency of event offerings: Bi-Monthly
- Events/Business Meetings offered in person: 2
- Events/Business Meetings offered virtually: 2
- CE offerings to date: 8.25

As you can see, we remain active and busy, continually planning and providing opportunities for all our members. We will continue to focus on our goals of consistency, growth, and quality as the year progresses. Thank you.

TREASURER'S REPORT: JAN 1- MAY 31, 2025

Alma Pope, RN, BSN, CPAN

Financial Snapshot

Income: \$8,246.77 (Spring Conference sponsorships/registrations, membership dues, California Wildfire relief donations)

Expenses: \$10,081.07 (Spring Seminar/Symposium, scholarships, National Conference support for six members, reference materials, network fees, accounting subscriptions)

Net Income: (-)\$1,834.30 (expected spring-heavy spending, aligns with budget)

Highlights

- Strong Spring Conference income supported educational initiatives.
- Sponsored six members for the National Conference in Dallas.
- Contributed to California Wildfire relief efforts.

Thank you for your support!



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

UGCR EXTENDS SUPPORT TO FIRE VICTIMS WITH GENEROUS DONATION

Alma Pope, RN, BSN, CPAN

In January of this year, a series of devastating wildfires swept through the Greater Los Angeles area, leaving behind a trail of destruction. Homes, businesses, and lives were severely impacted. Deeply moved by the tragedy, UGCR focused our charitable efforts at this year's Spring Symposium on supporting those affected by these catastrophic fires.

Recognizing nurses' vital role in disaster response, especially those serving directly in the affected communities, we partnered with the Philippine Nurses Association of Southern California (PNASC). Through raffle ticket sales and generous donations at the event, we raised \$380, which was sent directly to PNASC to aid in their support efforts for wildfire victims.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed and to the nurses who continue to serve with compassion and dedication on the front lines.

**TAPAN UGCR
LOS ANGELES
DISASTER
RELIEF**

*In the aftermath of
devastating fire, entire
communities are left in
need of urgent assistance*

**In partnership with the Philippine Nurses
Association of Southern California**

PNASC supports the following organizations:

- ✓ **LA Fire
Department
Foundation**
- ✓ **The American
Red Cross**
- ✓ **Pasadena
Humane
Society**

**YOUR SUPPORT
CAN MAKE ALL
THE DIFFERENCE**

*We're calling on you to lend a hand and
bring hope back to those affected.*

**Log-in to your
Zelle account
before scanning
the QR code!**

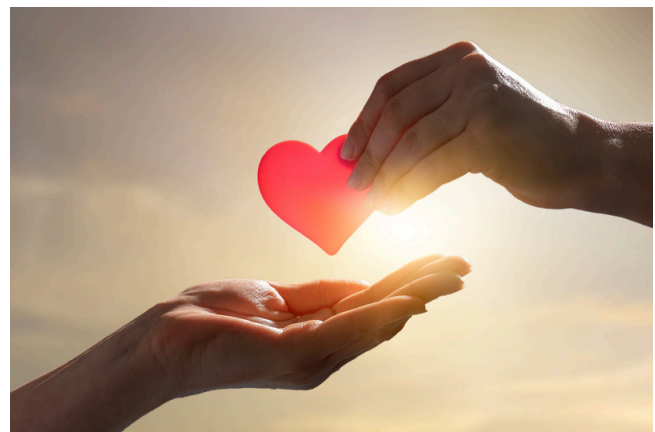
SCAN HERE

**DONATE
NOW**

Together, We Can Rebuild!



photo credit: <https://myradar.com/news/2025-los-angeles-wildfires-helpful-links/h>



CERTIFICATION CORNER

Congratulations
on passing the
certification exam!

CPAN:
Princy Chaco
Jhundy Tamayo

CAPA:
Jennifer Ornado
Shobin George

CPAN/ CAPA:
Jenelyn Sumera

CERTIFIED



Stay Tuned for Virtual Study Group Announcements!



Fall Registration Window:
July 1- October 31, 2025

Fall Examination Window:
September 15-November 15, 2025

REGISTER NOW

UPCOMING EVENTS

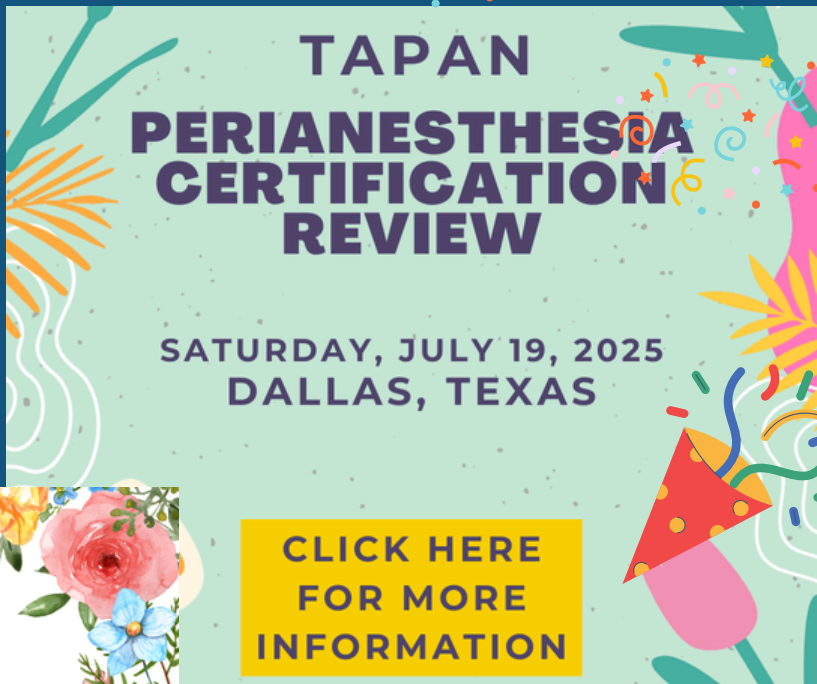


TAPAN UGCR

*Business meeting and
rep -in-service by FAVO-
Eagle Pharmaceuticals*

Tuesday, June 10, 2025
6:30-8:30 pm
The Woodlands, Texas

[CLICK HERE](#)

**TAPAN
PERIANESTHESIA
CERTIFICATION
REVIEW**

SATURDAY, JULY 19, 2025
DALLAS, TEXAS

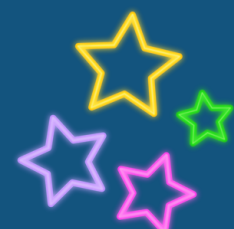
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FOR MORE
INFORMATION](#)



TAPAN'S
**49TH ANNUAL
STATE
CONFERENCE**

SEPTEMBER 26-27, 2025
CONROE, TEXAS

STAY TUNED
FOR MORE
INFORMATION



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS




ASpan
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

**Member
GET-A
Member
CAMPAIGN**

Tell your colleagues about ASpan,
earn rewards for doing so.




ASpan
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

**REGISTER
NOW**

**2025
SUMMER & FALL
WEBCASTS & SEMINARS**

**WEBCASTS
FREE
FOR
MEMBERS!**

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

As of April 2025, TAPAN UGCR membership is at **507!** Continue to promote ASpan Membership to your colleagues and friends.

There are many advantages to ASpan membership including automatic registration in our state component (TAPAN) and our regional component (UGCR). For more information on membership benefits, go to ASpan.org

Member-get-a-Member Campaign going on from January 1 – December 31, 2025. Invite your colleagues to join ASpan today!



tapanugcr@gmail.com



tapanugcr.nursingnetwork.com



Candace Miller
President



Sheila Anthony
VP/President-Elect



Aubrey Droemer
2nd Vice President



Alma Pope
Treasurer



Jacqueline Hawk-Cotten
Recording Secretary

TAPAN UGCR EXECUTIVE BOARD 2024-2025



The Upper Gulf Coast Region of the Texas Association of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (TAPAN), as a component of the American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (ASPAN), advances nursing practice through education, research, and standards



tapanugcr@gmail.com



tapanugcr.nursingnetwork.com



Rosa Fraga
Corresponding Secretary



Shelby Peterson
Policies and Procedures Chair



Eric Pazziuagan
Newsletter Editor & Historian



Patty Charles
Woodlands Chapter Chair



Geraldine delos Santos
Immediate Past President