



SLATE OF CANDIDATES – 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Arkansas Center for Nursing, Inc. is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for the 2020 Board of Directors elected positions. Please consider these candidates and their qualifications for service on the Board. Descriptions of the candidates are included on the following pages. All information was provided by the candidates as part of the application packet. You may view candidate CVs/Resumes using the link [2020 Board of Directors CVs/Resumes](#).

At-Large Representative – this position is for an Individual member of the ACN. Two of the three At-Large positions must be filled by a direct care provider (e.g., staff nurse, nurse practitioner, CRNA, etc.). This At-Large position must be filled by a direct care provider.

Candidates:

- Terri McKown

Organizational Member (Healthcare Organization) – this position is for an Organizational Member of the ACN that represents a healthcare organization.

Candidates:

- Alesha Collins- Howard Memorial Hospital
- Melissa Easdon – University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Organizational Member (Professional Nursing Organization) – this position is for an Organizational Member of the ACN that represents a professional nursing organization.

Candidates:

- Stephen Pennington – Arkansas Nurses Association
- Leonie DeClerk – Arkansas Nurse Practitioner Association

Voting on the candidates will occur at the Annual Meeting on October 17, 2019.

Terri McKown, DNP, FNP-BC – Candidate for At-Large Representative



Employer	Monfee Medical Clinic/ Arkansas Tech University
Position Title	APRN/ Professor
ACN Member since	2018

Qualifications for the Board position

I practice as an APRN one day a week in a local ambulatory family practice clinic and volunteer biannually at River Valley Christian Clinic--serving the uninsured. I also teach in the pre-licensure and master's levels at Arkansas Tech University. My position is unique as I stay current in evidence-based practice to improve patient outcomes yet teach in both the didactic and clinical settings providing the most up to date information for future nurses. Now as an "empty nester", I feel I have the time to commit to a progressive organization.

BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Why are you seeking a position on the ACN Board?

ACN interested me at first during the "40 over 40" initiative. I nominated two individuals last spring and attended the ceremony. It was rewarding to see nurses recognizing "the young" for their accomplishments to the field of nursing. I believe in the mission and strategic plan of ACN. I see the culture of nursing, nursing programs, community health, barriers, etc. firsthand as a practitioner. I know our community and state can improve.

Briefly describe how you have served the ACN (or the Arkansas Action Coalition) in the past.

I have not served in the past due to time constraints. I attended the June conference call meeting as my "first" to elect a new Co-Chair for the Leadership Committee. As stated above, I am eager to learn more and become more involved with this organization. I plan to attend the annual meeting on Oct. 17th and have already registered for the Nurses on Boards training in Memphis Oct. 29th-30th.

What talent, skills, and resources can you contribute as an ACN Board member?

I have 29 years' experience as a registered nurse, 19 as an APRN, and 16 1/2 years as an educator. I volunteer at a community based indigent clinic-River Valley Christian Clinic providing free medical care to uninsured individuals. I co-wrote a grant for this clinic in the amount of \$56,700 in 2010 and was a committee member with ATU's nursing department's grant securing \$135,199 to improve our simulation center. My doctorate (DNP) is in Nursing Administration, and I currently teach in our Nursing Administration program at the MSN level. I implemented Arkansas' first modified Dedicated Education Unit (innovative teaching model) for beginning junior level students fall 2018 with our main practice partnership. This has expanded to two separate organizations this fall. This was recently briefed in the Arkansas Times 2019 Nurses Guide. My husband and I own a local business for the past 14 years.

**Alesha Collins, MSN, MHA – Candidate for Organizational Member
Representing a Healthcare Organization**



Employer	Howard Memorial Hospital
Position Title	Registered Nurse, Chief Nursing Officer
ACN Organizational Member since	2019
ACN Individual Member since	2017

Qualifications for the Board position

Howard Memorial is a 20-bed critical access hospital in Nashville, Arkansas. We also have a Medical and a Surgical Clinic with 3 providers, Behavioral Health clinic, and Specialty Clinic. I will be able to provide information from the standpoint of serving a rural community and the nursing population in that area. Many times, the large tertiary care facilities are represented on committees and I would like to give a voice for the smaller hospitals.

BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Why are you seeking a position on the ACN Board?

I would like to be the voice for small, rural hospitals. I am also the current President of ArONE and can bridge the gap between the two organizations.

Briefly describe how you have served the ACN (or the Arkansas Action Coalition) in the past.

I was selected in the first group of 40 under 40 nurses selected in Arkansas and would like to have a more active role in the organization that gives back to the profession of nursing.

What talent, skills, and resources can you contribute as an ACN Board member?

I have experience in leadership. I feel I am a great communicator. I have experience in vetting speakers for conferences and would love to assist in that capacity if elected. I believe nursing is a calling and we all have a duty to the patients and customers we serve.

Melissa J Easdon, RN, BSN, BA, MBA – Candidate for Organizational Member Representing a Healthcare Organization



Healthcare Organization	University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
Position Title	Director, Emergency Department and CDU
ACN Organizational Member since	2019
ACN Individual Member since	2017

Qualifications for the Board position

I have been employed for three years as the ED/CDU Director at UAMS and was asked by nursing leadership to consider serving as a representative for UAMS.

BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Why are you seeking a position on the ACN Board?

I would like to serve as a representative of my organization on the ACN Board. As one of the larger hospitals in the state, with a strong commitment to education, I feel that it is important for us to participate in developing goals and strategies for nursing in our state and to commit our support in reaching those goals.

Briefly describe how you have served the ACN (or the Arkansas Action Coalition) in the past.

I solicited donations of art for the Keeper of the Lamp Art Auction.

What talent, skills, and resources can you contribute as an ACN Board member?

I have over 15 years of leadership experience in multiple hospitals. I have also held leadership roles in the Arkansas Emergency Nurses Association and am a member of the Fundraising Committee for the Emergency Nurses Association at the national level.

I have a passion for underserved populations and am currently developing a SANE program at UAMS as well as a Human Trafficking program that I hope to roll out, through the Arkansas Hospital Association, to all the EDs and OB units throughout the state. I am also a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee at UAMS.

Stephen Pennington, MSN, RN, CENP, NEA-BC, NE-BC, CCRN-K – Candidate for Organizational Member Representing a Professional Nursing Organization



Professional Nursing Organization	Arkansas Nurses Association
Position Title	President-Elect
ACN Organizational Member since	2019
ACN Individual Member since	2016

Qualifications for the Board position

I am the President-Elect of the Arkansas Nurses Association. As a representative for that organization, I will be able to help the Board of Directors with promotion of Strategic Initiatives II, III, and V by providing a collaborative outlet with the largest nursing professional organization in the state.

BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Why are you seeking a position on the ACN Board?

I am seeking a position on the ACN BOD because, as a member, I see the difference that this organization is making in promoting the health of Arkansans through nursing development. As a leader in the Arkansas Nurses Association, I want to help break down barriers and establish avenues for the promotion of advancing nursing education, leadership, practice, and workforce development.

Briefly describe how you have served the ACN (or the Arkansas Action Coalition) in the past.

The Arkansas Nurses Association has provided financial support through organizational membership in the ACN. ARNA has also taken a proactive role in social media promotion of ACN events and maintains a presence during ACN activities. ARNA has incorporated into their strategic plan to strengthen the professional relationship with ACN because it is important to demonstrate one cohesive voice in educating the nurses of Arkansas to become change agents in improving Arkansas's culture of health.

What talent, skills, and resources can you contribute as an ACN Board member?

I bring previous Board of Director experience to the position. I have received training on non-profit management, accounting, and financial management. As having served in nursing leadership positions in the hospital setting, I have a good understanding of the need for leading change. I also have a passion for disruptive innovative practices in health care and change management. I will bring local, regional, and national networking connections through my position in ARNA and the American Nurses Association.

Leonie DeClerk, DNP, PhD(c), APRN, FNP-BC – Candidate for Organizational Member Representing a Professional Nursing Organization



**Professional
Nursing
Organization**

Arkansas Nurse Practitioner
Association

Position Title

Board Member, Representative to
ACN

**ACN
Organizational
Member since**

2019

**ACN Individual
Member since**

2017

Qualifications for the Board position

As a member of Arkansas Nurse Practitioner Association, I am eligible to run for the Organizational Member Position. In addition, I have 37 years' experience as a registered nurse in Arkansas, including 20 years as a nurse practitioner, and over 10 years as a faculty member. I have excellent overall knowledge and understanding of nursing in Arkansas.

BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Why are you seeking a position on the ACN Board?

The purpose of the Arkansas Center for Nursing, which encompasses improving the health of Arkansans through optimizing nursing workforce and creating a culture of health is new to my heart. I have worked as a nurse, nurse practitioner, and educator in Arkansas for 37 years. Much of my experience has been with underserved and persons with poor socio-economic status. I know that we, as nurses, can make a difference in the lives of all Arkansans. Since our roots with Florence Nightingale, nurse have recognized that health starts in the environment. We also know that nurses are undervalued being considered part of the furnishings in many facilities. I would be proud to work with an organization that promotes nursing through the use of data and works to improve social determinants of health for all Arkansans.

Briefly describe how you have served the ACN (or the Arkansas Action Coalition) in the past.

My previous service to the Arkansas Center for Nursing has been tangential. I have worked on policy that aligns with that of the Arkansas Center for Nursing in my roles as health policy co-chair for Arkansas Nurses Association, and Board Member of Arkansas Nurse Practitioner Association. I have also helped the Executive Director source some information that she needed for reports. I was honored to speak briefly at the 2018 Annual Meeting about nurses speaking with one voice to move policy forward in the legislature.

What talent, skills, and resources can you contribute as an ACN Board member?

I have experience with strategic planning developed during my DNP program. I have some experience with statistical analysis developed during my PhD program. I have good communication skills, both written and verbal. I work well with others to develop coalitions to accomplish organizational aims. I function well in leadership and supporting roles; the mission is more important than recognition. I am excellent strategic thinker, especially when finding data and arguments to support a point of view. One of my best attributes is that I can find information that is buried by other organizations. If elected to the Board of the Arkansas Center for Nursing, I will work tirelessly to advance the mission of the organization.