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## Message from the Board

# Celebrating Leadership in SUNA

I often hear co-workers say, "Why should I belong to my professional association?" or "I just don't have the time to give to the organization." When we look at an association such as SUNA, its success is dependent on volunteers and leaders who give so much of their time and energy. Being a leader for SUNA includes many roles at the local and national levels. When I was approached by a former Board member to take on the challenge of being the Western Regional Director, I was very flattered and excited at the prospect, but also nervous, and I questioned if I had the qualifications to do this job. I am so thankful that I said yes. It has given me an opportunity to grow professionally and personally.

Leadership has been described as the wise use of power and the ability to influence others effectively in order to accomplish a positive goal. With regard to nursing, nurse leaders can influence levels of motivation by shaping the organization's working climate, which in turn shapes the attitudes of nurses and other health care providers themselves. Good leaders are made not born. If you have the willpower and desire, you can be an inspiring leader.

There are plenty of opportunities to show your leadership skills and gain the same professional and personnel satisfaction that I have experienced. Maybe if you are a good public speaker, you can present an educational program for your local chapter. If you are a good writer, you might consider submitting an article to the *Uro-Gram* or *Urologic Nursing* journal. If you are good at networking or leading groups, you might want to become an officer for your local chapter, or consider joining a SIG or being a SIG leader.

It seems that after attending the SUNA Annual Conference and the leadership workshops, we come home excited and motivated to recharge our local chapters; however, many times the enthusiasm fades. It can be challenging for leaders to increase member activity and bring life back to their chap-



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ters. Take time to reflect on the challenges that your chapter is facing. Do the same four to five people seem to be doing all the work? Is your chapter having difficulty filling officer positions? As a chapter leader, you need to look at the talents that exist within your chapter and look for new ways to fill these roles so that your chapter stays viable.

We are about to start a new year. Take the first step, make resolutions as a leader, seek out member involvement, and find those hidden talents and leadership qualities to fill the roles you need.

What do you need to do to light that spark that you have inside yourself to share your skills with your peers? I encourage you to say yes and not doubt yourself if asked to help in a project or take on the challenge of a leadership role. The personal rewards and opportunities might never happen unless you take that challenge. Urologic nursing reaches beyond the clinical aspects; it involves compassion, ingenuity, and most of all, leadership.

Despite increasing work loads, tighter budgets, and increasing stress, we must never forget why we chose the field we did. Whatever your special skills are in the work setting, whether clinic, surgery, or hospital, thanks for all that you do for your profession. SUNA is about the commitment to excellence in clinical practice through the education of its members, patients, family, and community. The only way SUNA can continue to be a strong advocate on issues affecting patient care and nursing practices in urology is with the involvement of its members. ■

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