



# Meet the Candidates

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# Meet the Candidates

## Candidate for Vice President & Program Committee Chair Jodi Spiess PhD, RN, GCPH



### **Why are you interested in this office?**

The role of the Vice President is a critical one for ACHNE. As the chair of the Program committee, it is critical that exciting and dynamic ideas are generated throughout the year for the Annual Institute (AI). The AI is a time when community/public health nursing educators come together for fellowship, the sharing of ideas, professional development, and friendship. I think this is one of the biggest benefits of ACHNE membership. The ability to interact with people who value what you value and just "get you" is hard to find. ACHNE has provided this ability to so many of us and I would like to continue the great work that VP's prior have done. I plan to attend MAL regional meetings (along with other approaches) to get input for future AI's, if elected. It is also extremely important to me to be available to help our President and President elect with their heavy workloads. Thank you for your consideration.

### **What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?**

My background in nursing includes 15 years in hospital, 5 years in public health department, and 10 years in academia, teaching public health nursing in RN-BSN, MSN, DNAP, and MHA programs. I have found that most students (and people in general) are looking to be seen and to belong. I teach, market programs, and recruit from this mindset. ACHNE is an organization that truly makes us feel seen and like we belong, that is why I love it so much. Listening to our members, keeping an eye on the horizon for public health and nursing changes, and remembering that everyone we work with are human beings is something I want to continue in ACHNE. I will work with members to get input on the AI and organize speakers and events that speak to the needs of our members and also address public health issues.

#### ACHNE Leadership Positions:

- Midwest Member at Large 2023-2025
- Education Committee 2017-present
- Plenary Planning Education sub- committee 2017-present,
- Spiess, J.A. & Frable, P. (2024). Disaster White Paper.
- January 2021-August 2021, Scholarship and Research Task Force, Association of Community Health Nurse Educators

#### Additional leadership positions:

- PHN journal reviewer
- COVID 19 Webster University Taskforce
- MO State DOH Covid Taskforce.

### **What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?**

I think the major priorities for ACHNE are continuing membership retention and growth initiatives. I will work with the Members-at-Large to get ideas for what members would like to learn and see represented at the AI. I will also help with recruitment efforts and fun ideas to help members feel they belong at the AI.



# Meet the Candidates

## Candidate for Secretary

### Lisa Turner, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC



#### **Why are you interested in this office?**

ACHNE is the professional nursing organization that I value the most. I would like an opportunity to give back to this organization that has given me so much. I have been an active member for the past 14 years, holding several leadership positions in recent years. I enjoyed being an active member of the executive committee when I served as vice president and would be honored to serve the organization again at that level. The office of Secretary is appealing to me because I pride myself on being a highly organized person and a team player, both skills that I think are integral to the duties of the Secretary.

#### **What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?**

I served as a member of the 2016-2017 Nominating Committee and then stepped into the role of Chairperson for the 2017-2018 Nominating Committee. I was appointed by the Board to serve as interim Vice President for the 2018-2019 year and then elected to the position for 2019-2021. I currently serve as co-chair of the Research Committee (since 2022). At the 2018 institute, I was honored to receive the first Past Presidents Award, which recognizes the recipient's leadership qualities, and at the 2021 AI, I was honored to receive the President's Award for Exemplary and Extraordinary Service as Vice President and Program Committee Chair. I would like to continue to develop my leadership skills with this nursing organization that has been integral to my career development over the years.

#### ACHNE Leadership Positions:

- Secretary 2023 – 25
- Nominating Committee from 2016 – 18, chairing the committee 2017 – 18
- Vice-President 2018 – 21
- Research Committee Co-chair 2021 – 23

#### Additional leadership positions:

- Faculty Secretary, Berea College Nursing Department for AY 2020-21 & AY 2021-22
- Berea College Faculty Counselor for Delta Psi Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau International 2017 – Present
- Faculty Status Council Chair at Berea College AY 2021 – 22; Chair AY 2022 – 23, which deals with questions of faculty status, including policy review and reviewing and recommending individual cases of promotion or tenure.

#### **What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?**

I see the major priorities for ACHNE are (1) to continue to provide leadership and guidance on community and public health nursing education, research, and practice; (2) to communicate and respond to public health issues; and (3) to strategize on how to best incorporate and promote community/public health nursing within an ever-changing health care system. I would contribute to these priorities through active participation in the ACHNE Executive Committee meetings, Board of Directors meetings, and strategic planning meetings.



# Meet the Candidates

Candidate for General Member-at-Large & Membership Committee Chair

**Scott Harpin, PhD, MPH, RN, APHN-BC, FNAP**



## **Why are you interested in this office?**

I would like to continue my cabinet-level service to ACHNE as the Membership Committee Chair to sustain the momentum we've had the past two years intersecting the work of Program and Membership Committees. As the lead of the Strategic Plan 'Membership' Pillar, much of that work has been scoped out for 2024-2026: I would like to help see those activities through with the energy of the Members-At-Large.

## **What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?**

I've been an Ex-Officio member of the Membership Committee since June 2024 and worked closely with the current committee chair, Dr. Giest throughout her term. In addition to ongoing leadership within ACHNE, I have been a leader in academic nursing in a Division Chair and full Professor at the U of Colorado, Specialty Director of our DNP/MPH Dual Degree, and other national level task forces supporting Advanced Public Health Nursing.

ACHNE Leadership Experience:

- Vice President & Program Committee Chair 2023 – 25
- Nominating Committee 2022 – 23
- "Mentorship" Strategic Planning pillar leader 2020 – 22

Additional Leadership Experience

- YHC/CU Street Medicine Board of Directors/Treasurer
- National Academies of Practice Program Committee
- Society of Adolescent Health and Medicine Program Committee & Nursing Research SIG
- State of Colorado Child Fatality Prevention System Co-Chair (Governor Appt)
- Minnesota Public Health Association

## **What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?**

ACHNE membership levels are almost back to pre-pandemic levels, which is something to celebrate! But continuing to grow membership while also meeting the wishes and desires of members to get what they want from our organization is an ongoing priority. Also, keeping ACHNE itself, relevant, as a sub-specialty academic nursing organization, is an ongoing issue and priority for leadership.



# Meet the Candidates

## Candidates for Midwestern Member at Large

### **Amy C. Buckenmeyer, PhD, MPH, RN, CPH, CPNP-PC**



#### **Why are you interested in this office?**

I am eager to pursue the Midwestern Member-at-Large position on ACHNE's Board of Directors. As a devoted Midwesterner, having journeyed from my master's degree in Wisconsin and a PhD in Illinois to building my career in Indiana and transitioning it to Michigan while residing in Ohio, I feel a unique connection to this region. This personal history, along with my professional path, has allowed me to forge meaningful relationships within community and public health nursing education circles. I'm enthusiastic about leveraging my experience in member recruitment and involvement to boost engagement in our Midwestern region. Together, we can elevate community capacity for both the organization and our regional community/public health nursing educators.

#### **What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?**

With over 20 years of experience in higher education as a public health nursing professor, I bring a robust mix of teaching, research, and leadership experience. My academic career includes roles at Valparaiso University and, more recently, the University of Michigan. I have extensive experience in membership recruitment, engagement, and retention and am passionately aware of the benefits and challenges to member-driven associations. I have executed mentorship programs in the American Public Health Association, American School Health Association, and Sigma, which have served to increase the capacity of these organizations to work towards important priorities for community/public health nursing. I am eager to contribute my skills and enthusiasm in member development to ACHNE's Midwestern Member-at-Large role.

#### **ACHNE Leadership Experience**

- Education Committee, 2022 – present
- Research Committee, 2022 – present
- CREIDE Committee, 2024 – present

#### **Additional Leadership Experience**

My extensive leadership experience spans university, college, professional, and community service. Notably, I've served as Vice-Chair of the Faculty Senate, chaired key university and college curriculum committees, and held multiple leadership roles within national professional organizations like the American School Health Association and the American Public Health Association. Additionally, I've contributed significantly to my community through board positions with the Y and the Coordinated School Health Advisory Committee.

#### **What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?**

One of the pivotal priorities for ACHNE is enhancing population health competency-based education within nursing curricula amid credit shifts towards other foundational nursing courses. As a staunch advocate for community/public health nursing, I am committed to championing increased, evidence-based credit allocations for population health nursing courses. This will ensure that community/public health nursing education maintains its rigor and relevance in developing competent professionals equipped to meet contemporary health challenges.



# Meet the Candidates

## Janelle L. Francis, DNP, RN



### Why are you interested in this office?

I believe there are always opportunities to grow as an individual both personally and professionally when serving on committees. Serving on committees provides you with different perspectives and working with colleagues from across the nation would do just that. Being a part of the ACHNE Board of Directors will provide me with chances to grow more, learn more and further my leadership skills. I have had previous experiences in serving within national organizations, but none were specific to the profession of nursing. The prospect of impacting the profession of community health nursing is exciting and daunting at the same time.

### What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?

My leadership experience on the local level has been on various committees within the college such as the Nursing Assessment committee. I have served as the chair of the committee for two, two-year terms. I am experiencing a new role serving as the secretary for the Nursing Assessment committee and have started my first year serving on the Undergraduate Committee for the college, serving as the secretary as well. I was recently appointed to the Nebraska Center for Nursing Board of Directors by the former Governor of Nebraska and was recently elected to serve as the Board Chair. This appointment is giving me a chance to grow our profession at the state level. In a previous job, I represented the State of Nebraska as the State Coordinator for Basic Life Support for the American Heart Association. In addition, I have served as the Education Committee Chair for America's Blood Centers, a national association of independent community blood centers.

#### ACHNE Leadership Experience

- Archives Committee Member
- CREIDE Committee Secretary, 2024 – present

### What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?

Without seeing any specific data, my educated guess for priorities would be to promote community health nursing as specialty. We all know its importance, but how do show within in our profession and to the lay public the important and valuable role community/public health nursing has in the health of country? To help with this, work with Sigma, ANA, APHA, APTR, and other public health organizations to promote public health and nursing with possible media campaign. There could be challenges ahead that could negatively impact these services and we need to upstream with our intervention. Another priority would be to encourage membership in the organization. This could be reaching out to other nurses that teach not just community health educators. More information is definitely needed to determine if these are priorities.



# Meet the Candidates

## Candidate for Northern Member at Large **Lisabeth M. Searing, PhD, RN**



### **Why are you interested in this office?**

I love being a part of ACHNE and would love to share that with more CPHN instructors from my region, hopefully to grow the organization so that it will continue to thrive.

### **What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?**

I bring strong knowledge of the organization and of the work of many committees to this position. These will help sell ACHNE to prospective members. I have been a member of ACHNE since I first started as a CPHN instructor in 2009.

I recently chaired the nominations committee without a co-chair and helped write a year-round schedule to increase the visibility of open positions. I have been a member of the Communications Committee for many years and chairing or co-chairing that committee for the past four years. Early on, I worked to increase engagement with the list-serv. In recent years, I worked to bring back the newsletter and to create a social media presence. As a part of the communications committee, I have worked with other chairs to share what is happening with their committees, giving me insight into many of the functions of ACHNE.

#### ACHNE Leadership

- Nominations Committee 2022 – 24, Chair 2023 – 24
- Communications Committee, 2011 – 25, Co-Chair 2021 – 22, Chair 2023 – 25

### **What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?**

The primary issue facing ACHNE, as with most organizations like ours, is financial. While we are doing okay, we would benefit from increased membership. We have a great product and need to get the word out to more people who might buy. Continuing the ongoing efforts of the membership committee and coming up with more ways to interest CPHN instructors in joining, is essential to our continued success.



# Meet the Candidates

## Candidate for Student Member at Large

*This newly established position provides a vital link between student members and the ACHNE Board of Directors. The Student Member At Large serves as the voice of student members, focusing on communication and recruitment. This role involves representing student perspectives, actively engaging in membership growth, and contributing to the overall development of ACHNE. As a member of the Board and the Membership Committee, the Student Member At Large will play a key role in fostering a vibrant and inclusive community for student members, while also gaining valuable leadership experience.*

## Noah Carson-Nelson, MSN, RN



### **Why are you interested in this office?**

My interest in serving ACHNE as a Student Member-at-Large stems from my belief that exposure to and involvement in community and public health nursing is vital to nursing education. Growing student involvement in a professional organization and in scholarship are important ways to provide this exposure and encourage this involvement. To this end, ACHNE's ongoing efforts to increase student membership are admirable and I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this work.

### **What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?**

As a new grad nurse, currently working in an acute care inpatient setting, my leadership in nursing is limited to my experiences in school. While in my direct-entry master's program, I assumed leadership in several student organizations, including sitting on the steering committee of a newly formed interdisciplinary Student Core of the Rush University Center for Excellence in Aging (CEA). In this role, I was part of growing the number of students engaging with the CEA from about 15 to over 60 people participating in at least one event per term.

#### Additional Leadership Experience

- Steering Committee Member, Rush University Center for Excellence in Aging Student Core, 2022 – 24
- Co-President, Rush University PRIDE, 2023 – 24
- Council Member-At-Large, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Evanston, IL, 2014 – 16
- Young Adult Representative to the Board of Directors, ReconcilingWorks, 2008 – 10

### **What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?**

It is my understanding that an established goal for this pilot-term for a Student Member-at-Large position is to increase student membership in the organization. Having limited involvement with the organization to this point, though I have ideas for ways to increase student involvement I first would like to learn more about the organization's history with this goal, what has been attempted in the past, and what barriers have already been identified. However, at the 2024 Annual Institute I observed that most of us were in attendance to present on projects completed in collaboration with faculty, though primarily from one College of Nursing. This makes me wonder in what ways ACHNE could encourage this faculty-student collaboration, directly contributing to community health nursing education while also growing organizational involvement.





# Meet the Candidates

## Candidates for Nominating Committee (select three)

### Rebecca A. Geist, DNP, RN



#### Why are you interested in this office?

The Nominations Committee faces the critical challenge of identifying members who can effectively represent the interests of ACHNE as leaders. With the evolving trends in nursing, the next generation of leaders must be prepared to advocate for the vital role registered nurses play across all practice settings, embrace the vision articulated by ACHNE, and support long-standing members. If elected to serve, I will collaborate with fellow committee members to identify and promote nurse leaders who can realize ACHNE's goals and vision.

#### What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?

I have a diverse background encompassing 17 years in hospital nursing management, 7 years in public school nursing, and 13 years in academia, specializing in community, population, and public health nursing. This breadth of experience has equipped me with a strong working knowledge of various nursing specialties. As a nursing faculty member, I prioritize teaching students the importance of valuing various backgrounds and perspectives and fostering an environment of respect and belonging among themselves, their peers, and the patients and families they serve. In the current landscape of nursing and advanced practice specialties, there is a tendency to work in silos, preventing us from functioning as a cohesive unit. ACHNE has a robust governance structure that has facilitated significant changes over the years, delivering exceptional support and leadership. As a member of the Nominating Committee, I am dedicated to advancing the ACHNE mission by promoting qualified and committed leaders to fill key positions within the organization.

#### ACHNE Leadership Experience

- Member at Large Chair 2023 – 25
- Nominating Committee 2022 – 23
- ACHNE Abstract Reviewer 2023 – Present

#### Additional Leadership Experience

- Voice of Hope, Lubbock, Texas, Board Member
- Texas School Nurse Organization Nomination Committee
- Texas Nurse Association Nomination Committee, Parliamentarian, House of Delegates, and Leadership Succession Committee
- Texas Nurse Organization Leaders Social Media Committee
- National League of Nursing Nominations Committee
- School Health Advisory Committee for Lubbock Independent School District- Health Chair
- Nursing Made Incredibly Easy and Nursing 2024, Reviewer, Journal Articles.
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Human Trafficking Collaborative Committee Member
- Texas International Education Consortium Committee Member
- Appointed to The Office of Governor Greg Abbott- West Texas Academic Collaborative for Child Sex Trafficking Research Program Committee Member

#### What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?

After serving on the ACHNE Nominations Committee and Member at Large (MAL) Chair, I recognize the importance of rejuvenation commitment and dedication to our organization. As the Mal Chair (2023-2025), we successfully grew ACHNE membership back to pre-COVID-19.



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Additionally, we implemented monthly meetings with each Member at Large leader: International, Midwest, Northern, Southern, and Western, which facilitated connections among members, fostered friendships and encouraged sharing ideas. As a member of the Nominating Committee, I aim to assist with succession planning and collaborate with the Members at Large to cultivate dedicated AHCNE leaders. Today, nurses and student nurses face numerous challenges, such as the need for flexibility, feeling unheard by their organizations, being overworked, and dealing with shortages while prioritizing patients' safety. By staying connected

## Mary Ellen LaSala, PhD, RN



### Why are you interested in this office?

I am honored to submit my nomination for another position on the Nominating Committee ACHNE. Having served as a member of this committee in the past for two years, including as Co-Chair for one year, I bring a deep understanding of its responsibilities and a strong commitment to fostering leadership within our community. Throughout my tenure on the Nominating Committee, I have had the privilege of working alongside dedicated colleagues to ensure that ACHNE continues to attract and cultivate passionate, qualified leaders who will guide our organization and the field of community health nursing education. In my role as Co-Chair, I have actively contributed to refining the processes by which we identify and nominate candidates for leadership positions, ensuring transparency, inclusivity, and alignment with ACHNE's strategic goals. I am particularly proud of the work we've done to enhance our outreach and communication strategies to ensure that all members feel empowered to step into leadership roles. This work has reinforced the importance of building a diverse and dynamic leadership team that reflects the values and goals of ACHNE, especially as we continue to address emerging challenges in community health nursing education. As a long-standing member of ACHNE and an advocate for the importance of community health nursing in academia and practice, I am dedicated to ensuring that our nominating process is fair, inclusive, and strategic, aligning with the needs and aspirations of the broader ACHNE community. I am committed to supporting the growth of emerging leaders who will further the mission of ACHNE and strengthen our impact on community health nursing education. I would be honored to again serve on the Nominating Committee and to contribute to the ongoing success and leadership of ACHNE. I appreciate your consideration of my nomination, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue supporting the work of this important committee.

### What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?

I have held many academic leadership positions over the years, which includes Chair of the Undergraduate Program at Stony Brook University, Hofstra University, and Nassau Community College. I have been Program Director and currently Director of Special Projects. I have been Chair of the Curriculum Committee for many years, and Chair of the Wellness Collaborative for the School of Nursing at Stony Brook University to name a few.

#### ACHNE Leadership Experience

- Northern Member-at-large 2023 – 2025
- Nominating Committee 2021 – 23, Co-Chair 2022 – 23
- Program Committee

### What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?

ACHNE is at a critical juncture in its continued growth and impact on community health nursing education. There are several key priorities and challenges that we must address to strengthen the organization and advance our mission. Below are some of the major issues I feel that are facing



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ACHNE, and how I believe I can contribute to addressing them: Leadership Development and Succession Planning One of the biggest challenges for any organization is ensuring a pipeline of capable, diverse leaders who are ready to step into key roles. ACHNE needs to continue to foster leadership development, particularly for underrepresented groups, to ensure our leadership is reflective of the diverse populations we serve. As a current member of the Nominating Committee and with my experience as Northern Member-at-Large, I am committed to ensuring that our nominating process actively seeks out diverse candidates from all backgrounds and regions. I will advocate for policies and practices that help identify and cultivate emerging leaders, ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of ACHNE. Engagement and Retention of Members With changes in the landscape of community health nursing and the increasing demands on nursing education, there is a need for greater member engagement and retention. ACHNE must continue to offer relevant, timely resources and educational opportunities that meet the evolving needs of our members. Having served on the Program Committee for the Annual Institute, I understand the importance of providing high-quality, relevant programming to our members. I will continue to advocate for educational content that addresses current challenges in community health nursing and promotes networking and collaboration among members. Advocacy for Community Health Nursing Education Achieving policy recognition and strengthening advocacy for community health nursing education at local, state, and national levels is essential to advancing our profession. With my background in leadership within ACHNE and my experience in representing the interests of the northern region as Member-at-Large, I am well-positioned to support advocacy efforts that elevate the role of community health nursing education within healthcare systems. I will help amplify ACHNE's voice, ensuring that our contributions to public health are recognized in policy discussions.

## Michele Lopez, DHED, MA, CNE, CDE, CHES



### **Why are you interested in this office?**

With over 25 years of dedicated membership in this community, I am deeply committed to the mission and values that our chapter upholds.

### **What expertise and leadership experience do you bring to this position?**

My experience in similar organizations has positioned me to contribute effectively on the Nominating Committee. Most recently, I served as President of the Professional Nurses Association-Dutchess/Putnam County, a position I held for 2 years. Prior to serving as President, I served as Vice President and Board member (5 years). Having served in many academic committees, I'm quite familiar with recording minutes, preparing reports, and developing policies and procedures.

### **ACHNE Leadership Experience**

- Awards Committee
- Membership Committee.
- Scholarship & Awards applications Reviewer

### **What do you see as the major priorities or issues facing ACHNE and how would you contribute to addressing them?**

As a member of the Nominating Committee, I see a major priority for ACHNE as ensuring strong and diverse leadership that can effectively address the evolving challenges facing our organization. I believe my experience has prepared me to identify and recruit qualified candidates who possess the necessary skills and vision to guide ACHNE forward.