



OADN is the national voice and a pivotal resource for community college nursing education and the associate degree pathway.

December 2, 2020

President-Elect Joseph Biden
Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris
c/o The Honorable Ted Kaufman
Chair
Presidential Transition Team
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect Harris:

On behalf of the Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN) we want to extend our congratulations on the 2020 election and look forward to collaborating to address the many healthcare and educational challenges facing our country. **OADN is the national voice and a pivotal resource for community college nursing education and the associate degree pathway.** As the national advocate for the over 1,100 associate degree nursing programs across the country, OADN works to advance excellence in nursing education and community college pathways into registered nursing careers. Institutions OADN represents educate over 50% of all newly licenses professional registered nurses (RN) which equates to an average of 81,000 RNs annually.

We realize you are acutely aware that community colleges are a vital part of the higher education system and have the capacity to provide individuals with the ability to launch careers, setting them on a path to achieve goals, with minimal debt. The community college nursing programs are essential to the healthcare of our country. Nowhere is this more important than in the many communities across the country that rely on these colleges to provide an educational approach that serves as a solid foundation for baccalaureate and higher degree obtainment. Research shows that community college nursing graduates are more likely to live and work in their communities after graduation. As these graduates' progress to higher levels of education, their communities reap the benefits of their growing skills, knowledge, and abilities. This is critical as these nurses will take on new roles in the community alongside their counterparts in more traditional acute care settings.

ADN graduates are also twice as likely to work in the most economically distressed areas and nearly twice as likely to work in rural areas. As critical health care providers to these vulnerable populations, across all care settings, these nurses must be prepared to address the social determinants of health in their professional practice.

OADN believes that a culturally competent nursing workforce, well-prepared to assess social determinants of health, is imperative to health equity. Community college and associate degree nursing programs also enhance the diversity of the nursing workforce, and by extension, the capacity to provide culturally competent care. Most new graduate nurses of diverse backgrounds enter the profession through the ADN pathway.

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic impacted nursing education programs across the country and provided many challenges. The pandemic required a transformation in the teaching/learning process. OADN always strives to support nursing education programs and as a result formed the OADN COVID-19 National Task Force. The task force addressed innovative methods of restructuring the teaching/learning process, recognized the need for modifications based on the pandemic; developed

strategies for providing meaningful clinical learning opportunities, discussed academic/practice partnership considerations, and created a plan for collaborating with industry partners for high quality and safe return of students to their clinical education in hospitals and other settings.

Community colleges are innovating to meet the growing and complex health care needs faced by their communities, through interprofessional education, simulation, directly providing care via nurse managed clinics, and the incorporation of population health and social determinants into curricula. OADN appreciates the administration's support for the Nursing Workforce Development Programs (Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et. seq]). OADN looks forward to a dialogue with the new administration that will emphasize the imperative need for Title VIII funding to be more inclusive and includes the reengagement of community colleges.

OADN welcomes the opportunity to be involved in the crucial discussion regarding health care and community colleges. We have a strong understanding of community colleges, as well as the nursing profession and the healthcare needs of this country. Please feel free to contact CEO Donna Meyer at donna.meyer@oadn.org.

Respectfully,



Donna Meyer MSN RN ANEF FAADN FAAN
Chief Executive Officer



Laura Schmidt DNP FNP-BC
President