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Linda L. Strong, *Sacred Heart University*



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Linda Strong of Sacred Heart University has been elected president of the Connecticut Association of Public Health Nurses (CAPHN), becoming only the second academic to assume the role in the 10-year history of the organization.

“I’m excited, because it’s a major step for any person to become the president of a state organization,” said Strong, director of Sacred Heart’s RN-BSN and RN-MSN. Programs and of the SHU Emergency Reserve Corps. “But more importantly, I’m excited to be able to lead CAPHN into its second decade, to be able to help it continue to grow, to reach even more people and have an even wider positive effect on our field.”

CAPHN was formed to promote the health of populations via a collaboration between public practices and academia (primarily Sacred Heart and Fairfield University at the outset). Strong said its primary goals are to promote standards for public-health nursing, to identify ways to improve the education and utilization of the public nurse work force, to develop partnerships with governmental and service agencies and programs and to educate the public about public health nursing.

In 2008, CAPHN began offering quarterly conferences, which have become one of its most significant outreach efforts. Each year student participation has risen, along with participation by public health nurses from a variety of disciplines. Recent topics of the conferences have been the relationship between public nursing and the Affordable Care Act and an evidence-based program focused on cardiovascular health in eastern Connecticut. The 2014 Student Workforce

Development Conference will occur on April 14, 2014, at Quinnipiac University, North Haven Campus.

Strong added that one of the goals of her presidency is to continue to expand the reach of the conferences. “While we’ve had increased student participation every year, we need to encourage the faculty from all the programs of all the schools of nursing in Connecticut to help this grow even further,” she said. “We will also be reaching out to such interprofessional colleagues as school health organizations, community health organizations, the occupational health field, pharmacists, health educators and the like to try to establish partnership roles. We are extremely interdisciplinary—we want and need to have an ongoing relationship with the other members of the public health workforce.”

Another imminent goal for CAPHN is further outreach to the community. “We’re looking at more ways of connecting with specific populations that are looking for help in promoting health,” Strong said. One example is Blackhorse 4 Heroes, a group based in Bethany that works with combat veterans. CAPHN has developed a fledgling partnership with the organization that Strong hopes will flourish, and she would like to see the relationship become a model for involvement with other groups around the state. For additional information, Strong can be contacted at strongl@sacredheart.edu.