



Association for Leadership Science in Nursing

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### **An interview with Dr. Angela Prestia, PhD, RN, NE-BC**

Angela is the President-Elect of ALSN. She is the Patient Care Director for a hospice organization, and serves as adjunct faculty in the Master's program in Nursing at Florida Atlantic University.

#### **Tell us a little about your career path, background, and passion for advancing nursing the science of leadership.**

I have been a career nurse for 45 years. I entered nursing school at age 18 and graduated from Broward Community College with my ASN, University of West Florida with my BSN, Vanderbilt University with my MSN, and then 29 years later graduated from Florida Atlantic University with my PhD in Nursing. I have worked full time throughout my career, only missing a combined 3 months when my children were born. I progressed through every position acute care had to offer, staff nurse, charge nurse, house supervisor, clinical nurse director, director of clinical quality and chief nursing officer, and systems chief nurse. Currently, I work full time as a Patient Care Director for a hospice organization, and teach as adjunct faculty in the Master's program in Nursing at Florida Atlantic University. I hold a certification in healthcare administration and am certified as a nurse executive. I am very passionate about the profession. It has been good to me and so in return I want to be good to it. My research and publications have all focused on providing nurse leaders with the tools they need to perform their roles in improving the staff experience and patient outcomes.

#### **Describe your leadership philosophy.**

I believe in the cascade of caring. Imagine a waterfall of caring. I truly believe that if I as leader care about my managers, then they are better able to care for their staff, who are then better able to care for the patients they serve. I believe myself to be an authentic leader, transparently communicating the good, the bad, and the ugly to staff while providing hope through continued learning, problem-solving, and innovation.

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**How has your involvement with ALSN influenced your career trajectory – what has been most valuable about it? What doors have opened to you as a result of your involvement?**

I was introduced to ALSN by my mentor, Dr. Rose Sherman, who I am most fortunate to know. Through this introduction, I realized that there were others interested in improving the plight of nurse leaders. I do believe that in our profession, there is a general feeling of “leadership” vs. “staff,” “them” against “us.” This has to end if our profession has any chance in evolving in this COVID continuum. The membership of ALSN can provide the collaboration necessary to develop any research idea which adds to the body of nursing leadership science. Several members have been generous to me and have helped provide me with the opportunities to improve my research and writing.

**What would you say to nurse leaders in academia or practice who are considering joining ALSN right now?**

I would ask them to contemplate how they would like to contribute meaningfully to nursing. If they believe that leadership is the fulcrum, essential for improved staff and patient outcomes, and they are interested in supporting nurse leaders, then this is the organization for them. This is an organization of collaboration, where practice, and academia meet to learn from one another, to research, write, and publish.

**What is the one thing you would like ALSN members to know?**

I believe that “Leadership is not about being the best; that it is truly about making everyone else better.” This organization attracts accomplished academicians and practitioners who know to leave their egos at the door. They listen intently, share evidence, learn from one another, and collaborate for the good of the nursing profession. As President-Elect, I will work to create an environment to assure that science supports nursing leadership.