

# SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL

## 29th BIENNIAL CONVENTION

San Francisco, November 13, 1987

### — THE PRESIDENT'S CHARGE —

Angela Barron McBride, RN, PhD, FAAN

This is an exciting time to be a professional nurse. The establishment of the National Center for Nursing Research within the National Institutes of Health by a House vote of 380 to 32 and a Senate vote of 89 to 7 provided us with an organizational entity which places nursing research in the mainstream of scientific inquiry. It has been reported that 90% of patient care in hospitals is delivered by nurses, but total nursing costs average less than 30% of a hospital's operating budget, which makes nursing departments profit centers capable of exerting great influence. The restructuring of health care has led to an almost insatiable need for nursing, making it a career opportunity for the 1990's. Since the early 1970's, the number of professional nurses has doubled, but the need for such caregivers has tripled. A career has been described as a long-term project through which self-realization and service to others may be achieved; nursing has a long, noble tradition of providing service to others and is increasingly able to obtain a reward structure that permits self-realization, too.

There are challenges before us as we nurture a new generation of scholars, learn to wield the power which is ours as revenue producers, and convince young (and not so young) women and men of the career opportunities available to nurses, but our assessment skills and background as problem solvers have prepared us to meet new situations with creativity, organization, resourcefulness, humor, and passion. These are some of the same qualities I hope to bring to the presidency of Sigma Theta Tau International as our association strives to help members get ready to meet the future.

I will be the 17th individual to serve as President of Sigma Theta Tau, and want to take office acknowledging our collective indebtedness and my own appreciation to our past presidents, particularly the immediate past presidents. They have brought us to this point in time when the association is respected around the world for its commitment to the development of nursing scholarship and leadership. It is in reflecting on our accomplishments that we can feel ready for new challenges. In mentioning the characteristics of our leaders, I also wish to praise the members who worked with them to move our own great society forward.

With the presidency of Sr. Rosemary Donley (1975-1981), Sigma Theta Tau was born again. With vision and caring, she set in motion the period of growth which was to end with the association becoming the second largest nursing organization in the United States. She and our first full-time executive officer, Nell Watts, prepared the way for Sigma Theta Tau to become an organization that does more than just acknowledge academic achievement; it is a vehicle through which members' expertise is used to further the profession and the public welfare. Together, they dared to ask, "After membership, what?"—and we have not failed to be future-minded since then. Nell Watts is particularly responsible for the phenomenal expansion of the organization from an association with 56 chapters in 1974 to one which will have 263 chapters in 1988. She has accomplished a tremendous amount by wedding a concern for the professional needs of members with business acumen.

Carol Lindeman (1981-1983), a pioneer in nursing research, gave the organization a Ten-Year Plan which made clear our commitment to knowledge building and the dissemination/utilization of research for the good of our members, the profession as a whole, and the public. Lucie Young Kelly (1983-1985) with verve and style shaped the association in at least three major ways: she taught us the importance of mentoring; made us Sigma Theta Tau *International*; and enlarged our list of needed professional skills to include fundraising.

Vernice Ferguson (1985-1987), wise and service-oriented, has crisscrossed this country in the last two years sharing her political savvy and encouraging the utilization of research. She has reminded us to nurture our young, to take responsibility for recruiting the brightest into our profession, and to collaborate with other nursing organizations. *Arista* is Greek for "best," and President Ferguson brought some of nursing's best thinkers together for *Arista '87* to brainstorm about the nursing shortage; in the process, she created a think-tank mechanism for systematically considering the issues of the day.

What these individuals have personally accomplished is a reflection of the drive and commitment of

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members in each chapter and in each region. We begin the next biennium, thanks to these individuals and the many others who supported their efforts, with the Center for Nursing Scholarship fast taking shape and our membership not limited to the boundaries of any one country. This is a time for developing new initiatives and for consolidating the ones we have in place.

As we contemplate the future, it is important that we not only remember the accomplishments of individuals, but that we proceed ever mindful of the organization's particular strengths. Last biennium's Resource Development Committee—Marjorie Beyers (Chairperson), Helen Grace, Susan Grobe, Elizabeth Tournquist, Nell Watts, Linda Brimmer, Marie Sparks, and myself—drew up such a listing to guide their deliberations. It is useful to review those points as we get ready for the next biennium:

- Sigma Theta Tau has a commitment to developing knowledge that can benefit the public, through networking at all levels (local, regional, national, and international). The structure promotes the development, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge across geographic and cultural boundaries. Through Sigma Theta Tau's recognition of excellence, knowledge is sustained and enhanced, and value trends are established.
- The emphasis of the organization is on collaboration. Its connections with colleges and universities across the country and around the world allow for innovative networking of students, faculty, and community leaders. Other nursing organizations look to Sigma Theta Tau for leadership and the association welcomes partnerships with other health-related groups so there can be concerted efforts aimed at public priorities.
- Sigma Theta Tau has a long tradition of excellence. It was the first organization to fund nursing research. *Image*, the society's journal, is the most widely read scholarly publication in nursing. The lexicon of terms used in the 1983 and 1987 editions of its *Directory of Nurse Researchers* was the first internationally distributed classification schema for categorizing nursing research. The association took the lead in establishing a Distinguished Lecturer Program.
- Sigma Theta Tau's mission transcends specialty interests. Its 120,000 members cut across specialty/functional lines and career stages, so it serves as a forum for discussion of issues which affect all aspects of the profession.
- Its members are leaders. Nearly two-thirds of the members hold advanced degrees and many have published widely. Members hold positions of influence in every aspect of the profession as well as related fields, so the association can bring together key clinicians, administrators, educators, researchers, and entrepreneurs for solving common problems and planning future action.
- The organization is international in scope. It plays a leadership role both in bringing scholars together for the cross-cultural sharing of information and in promoting what is the essence of the science of caring worldwide.
- Sigma Theta Tau is futuristic. It was the first major nursing association to develop a ten-year organizational plan. The society has a tradition of valuing strategic planning—a key ingredient in leadership and achievement.

With these strengths in mind, let us now create a vision for 1987-1989. Together, let us work to make the following agenda come to pass:

- The Center for Nursing Scholarship becomes a physical reality and the building-fund drive exceeds the goals.
- The electronic network system, which is the heart of the Center's International Library becomes operational, forging new ties between us.
- New efforts are undertaken to nurture the development of members in the early years of their careers.
- *Arista '88*, Sigma Theta Tau's second "think tank" conference, brings experts together to develop further a universal language for nursing scholarship—one that will, in turn, shape the development of the Center's International Library. The content of *Arista* conferences is discussed within chapters and regions, providing focused, issues-oriented programs.
- The networking strengths of the association are used to launch a new dissemination effort aimed at closing the gap between research and practice.
- A mechanism is developed to share the best of nursing scholarship with consumers.
- The Distinguished Lecturer Program is implemented and extended to showcase the range of nursing excellence and to meet the programming needs of local chapters.
- The first international chapters are chartered.

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- New collaborative ventures furthering scholarship are undertaken with other nursing organizations.
- My special interest, career development, is explored at the 1988-1989 regional assemblies through my keynote emphasizing "Leadership and A Talent for Optimism," panel discussions on how one more or less successfully combines career and family, and other related sessions.
- Sigma Theta Tau's 1989 international conference in conjunction with the International Council of Nurses' (ICN) meeting analyzes the science of caring worldwide.
- Sigma Theta Tau continues to be the organization that prepares members for life after graduation by offering excellent continuing education opportunities. At the 1989 Convention, this will include several pre-convention intensive workshops aimed at skills building (e.g., on the research-policy link, grantwriting, negotiating, media relations).

I hope that this agenda for the next biennium strikes you as an exciting one—one with which you care to be involved. All of us need to work together to make it a reality.

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I embark on this Biennium with a definite set of beliefs:

- membership services should be maintained and expanded.
  - anything new should build on current strengths
  - and that strategic planning is the hallmark of a dynamic and strong organization.
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Carol Lindeman did not just help us develop a single Ten-Year Plan, but also the sense that every biennium should think a decade ahead. The agenda for the next biennium is meant to continue our tradition of excellence, and I will do all in my power to serve that tradition while moving to be ready for the next century.

Simone de Beauvoir distinguished between two competing philosophical principles: immanence (maintaining the existing system) and transcendence (planning for the future). She believed that women were held responsible for the maintenance of systems so often that they had little or no time and energy to be visionary. I believe that is one of the central issues we have to confront in our daily lives and this is one that confronts us in Sigma Theta Tau International. How do we handle day-to-day responsibilities while at the same time moving our practice in new directions? The challenge is to hold onto what is best about our present as we strive to make our mark on the future. And make our mark we will!

Angela Barron McBride



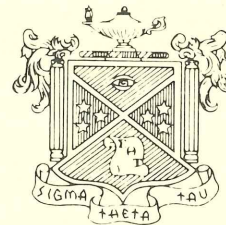
**A**ngela Barron McBride has been very active in Sigma Theta Tau International. She served as First Vice President from 1983-1985. As the First Vice President, Dr. McBride became heavily involved in the program and research activities of the organization. She served as chair of the Program Committee and as a member of the Research Committee. Some of her other activities within Sigma Theta Tau include: planner of the Jerusalem Conference, evaluator of prospective chapters, member of the Governing Council, and writer for *Reflections*. As the President-Elect, Dr. McBride served on the Public Affairs, Project Advisory, and Resource Development Committees. She also has been a member of the Task Force to develop the National Institute of Mental Health's (NIMH) research agenda for women's mental health; she is currently serving on the National Advisory Mental Health Council of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA).

Angela Barron McBride has made major contributions to nursing and women's studies. She has edited one monograph and authored three books, and has been a contributor to over twenty other books; she has also written for many scholarly journals. Dr. McBride is best known for having written the first critically acclaimed book to look at motherhood in light of the Women's Movement.

She was given the Distinguished Alumna Award by Yale University School of Nursing in 1978. She was named an "American Nurses' Foundation Scholar" in 1979. In 1980, Dr. McBride was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing; she also was made a Kellogg National Fellow (1981-84). In 1982, she was elected to Sigma Xi. Dr. McBride received the ANA Council of Specialists in Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing Award for Current Impact in Research and Scholarship for 1983. That same year, she was awarded an honorary doctorate, Doctor of Public Service, by the University of Cincinnati. In 1984, she was selected as one of the outstanding educators in the State of Indiana by the *Indianapolis Star*. In 1985, she received the Distinguished Research Award of the Midwest Nursing Research Society, and in 1986 was elected to the National Academies of Practice as a Distinguished Practitioner.

## Sigma Theta Tau Presidents

Term	President
1929-34	Dorothy Ford Buschman (Alpha)
1934-38	Florence Parisa (Delta)
1938-41	Ruth P. Kuehn (Epsilon)
1941-47	Katherine Densford (Zeta)
1947-51	Frances George (Eta)
1951-55	Thelma Dodds (Zeta)
1955-57	Myrtle K. Aydelotte (Gamma)
1957-59	Lois Austin (Epsilon)
1959-62	Edna Treasurer (Kappa)
1962-65	Catherine McClure (Eta)
1965-71	Virginia Crenshaw (Iota)
1971-75	Ruth Hepler (Alpha Epsilon)
1975-81	Sr. Rosemary Donley (Eta)
1981-83	Carol Lindeman (Beta Psi)
1983-85	Lucie Young Kelly (Alpha Zeta)
1985-87	Vernice D. Ferguson (Kappa)
1987-89	Angela Barron McBride (Alpha)



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**Sigma Theta Tau International**  
 1200 Waterway Boulevard  
 Indianapolis, Indiana 46202