

3Ps: Passion, persuasiveness and persistence help to grow RNAO



In my last column I talked about the 3Ps – passion, persuasiveness and persistence – as the character traits I see in nurses who are becoming more and more politically active.

You will see these traits yourself when you turn to page 18 and meet the 10 nurses RNAO selected to participate in its political training program last fall.

It's time now to draw on the 3Ps in another arena that is just as important to the future of RNAO as political action is to the future of high quality and universally accessible health care. This area is membership growth and development.

Increasing RNAO's membership enables us to ensure the views of nurses are included in all discussions and debates affecting the health of nurses and the public we serve. To make that happen, each nurse needs to show a passion for our professional association, persuasiveness in promoting the value of membership to colleagues and other nurses, and persistence in gathering support for RNAO and its endless opportunities for personal growth, professional education, social awareness, political action, influence and impact.

The more members we have, and the more committed they are, the more means and energy we have to tackle the issues that affect us and the public.

There's simply no arguing the notion that the stronger and more influential RNAO is, the stronger you will become as RNs.

In our coverage of the political training program, you will meet Donna Kearney, an RN who made an observation that perfectly illustrates that point. She told us how the training offered her an opportunity to see the guts of the association and the true power of the collective voice of nurses. She admitted to not realizing RNAO's influence as a frontline RN in the field, but respecting it when she was at

home office and was able to feel the strength of the team environment.

We have to draw on this incredible energy and show our colleagues and other nurses just what they're missing by not being members of the association.

Many nurses have already played a vital role in helping to build our collective voice. In fact, 2005-2006 was another exceptional year for membership recruitment and retention. Overall, membership increased by 8.6 per cent to 25,807 members. This is vital as we embark on

“There's simply no arguing the notion that the stronger and more influential RNAO is, the stronger you will become as RNs.”

an election year and increase RNAO's presence in the halls of government, at decision-making tables, in boardrooms, classrooms and on the frontlines.

To build on the success of our last membership year, RNAO is stepping up its exciting “Get 7” program, which relies on existing members to use the 3Ps to create a stronger profession and a stronger nursing voice across the province and the country.

For every new RNAO member you recruit before the end of May, you

receive a \$20 RNAO gift certificate. For every new nursing student you recruit, you receive \$5. And if you recruit seven new RNAO members, you get your membership free in the subsequent membership year.

This exciting initiative looks to you to show non-members across Ontario how important it is for them to join almost 26,000 colleagues and become engaged and informed ambassadors for the profession and for healthy public policy. It's clear that the 90 per cent of members who choose to renew their memberships each year see the importance of being part of RNAO.

Nurses' commitment to their professional association is also clear in the results of our membership survey, conducted this past summer. Members told us their top reasons for joining the association. Their motivations relate directly to the important work we do to raise awareness of nursing and health issues.

The survey found nurses join RNAO for its information sharing on health care and nursing issues and its advocacy and action.

Advocacy and action, in fact, was described by members as the second most valuable thing about RNAO membership, second only to legal protection.

The power of voluntary members is second to none and we count on you – the owners of this association – to make our passion contagious as we continue to speak out for healthy public policy. We also count on your passion to help grow RNAO membership, and we challenge you to recruit at least one colleague by the end of March.

This will ensure various perspectives inform RNAO's work, and with one strong collective voice we will continue to shape the future.

DORIS GRINSUN, RN, MSN, PhD (CAND), O.ONT, IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RNAO.