

Why Giving Back to Your Association Matters



September 22, 2019

Each year more than 2,000 individual nurses donate to the AORN Foundation. Their contributions support nurses in many ways, such as through education scholarships and grants to attend conferences.

The year's top nurse philanthropist is selected by the AORN Foundation Board of Trustees based on recommendations from nurse peers and this year two deserving philanthropists were honored: Nathalie Walker, MBA, RN, CNOR, and Herbert Laing, RN.

Walker volunteers her time to the silent auction committee to acquire donations, give items and cash, and help in the silent auction room at Global Surgical Conference & Expo. "With the support of a great committee each year we raise significant monies for the Foundation." She says an even greater benefit has been working with the committee and developing true friendships with them and meeting so many AORN members that visit the auction room.

Financial support for the AORN Foundation is also something Walker is committed to. "I made my first donation to the AORN Foundation when I attended my first AORN conference in Anaheim in 1993," Walker shares. "Each year I would donate either before or at the meeting. I was inspired to give a little more each year as I learned more about what the Foundation actually did for perioperative nurses."

In 1999 as Chair of the Louisiana Council of AORN Chapters, Walker and the Council raised \$25,000, which continues to benefit Louisiana AORN members with an annual scholarship.

Seeing the power of giving, Walker set out to establish an endowed scholarship given in her name. "With the support of my husband, George, I was able to reach my personal goal to establish the Nathalie Walker MBA, RN, CNOR Endowed Scholarship, which has now assisted three AORN members from across the country to advance their educational degrees."

Laing is also actively involved in the Silent Auction. He ended up helping with the silent auction by accident when helping a friend deliver a heavy basket to the Silent Auction in New Orleans in 2012. When they arrived, Laing met Walker and volunteered to help with the auction set up that year, which has “started a relationship running eight years and counting with all the wonderful volunteers on this committee.”

Fundraising at the Chapter level in San Antonio also has been an important goal for Laing. “Our chapter feels very strongly that we should give back to an organization that has so strongly supported our profession and our chapter, and we support the need for providing scholarships, including the AORN of San Antonio Endowed Scholarship to those who are strongly interested in the perioperative field.

“I believe in the mission of AORN and the Foundation support for this mission because without strong education, research, legislative support, and networking, the challenges facing a perioperative nurse could and would be overwhelming,” Laing says.

The AORN Foundation belongs to all AORN members, Walker stresses. “I believe I've received more than I could ever give, and I encourage every AORN member to experience the joy of donating to our professional association and our community of perioperative nurses.”

Learn how to become involved with the [AORN Foundation](#) and mark your calendar for AORN Foundation Day on March 31.