Academy in the News:

Following a groundbreaking Supreme Court announcement on Friday, June 26, legalizing same-sex marriage in all 50 states, the Academy released a statement commending the court on their decision:

The American Academy of Nursing commends the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Obergefell v. Hodges, which allows same-sex couples in all states to be married. This ruling marks a high point for the nation, as marriage between two individuals is now seen as a fundamental right, regardless of sexual orientation.

As nurse leaders, the Academy is committed to ensuring the health and well-being of our fellow citizens, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Today’s decision aligns with the Academy’s mission of promoting diversity and eliminating health disparities across the nation. Read the full statement.

The Academy also released a statement condemning the Charleston killings.

The American Academy of Nursing condemns the abhorrent racially-motivated shooting deaths of nine people on June 17, 2015, at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church located in Charleston, SC. We are outraged that racism in our country continues among us.

We equally condemn the failure to implement policies for the control of firearms. Racism and lack of firearm control are tightly linked, and are greatly harmful to the health and well-being of communities. Read the full statement.

On June 25, the Academy recognized the Supreme Court decision in King v. Burwell as a huge step to ensure individuals have access to health care.

“Today’s decision ensures that millions of Americans can retain the peace of mind that comes with access to high-quality health care they otherwise couldn’t afford. It also means ultimately lower health care-related costs for everyone else. This is a classic win/win for those we care for and their loved
ones," said Academy President, Diana J. Mason, PhD, RN, FAAN. Read the full statement.

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Academy and Consumer Reports Partner on Choosing Wisely® Brochures

The Academy has partnered with Consumer Reports to translate its new Choosing Wisely list of “Things Nurses and Patients Should Question,” into engaging brochures for consumers to reference for common health practices and treatments.

The first brochure titled, “Hospital Hazards,” focuses on four practices that can harm older people including bed rest, physical restraints, interrupted sleep and urinary catheters. The second brochure focuses on fetal monitoring, titled, “Monitoring Your Baby’s Heartbeat During Labor,” and includes a section offering advice to women on making their labor and birth easier.

The Academy plans to continue creating brochures as more recommendations are added to the list.
In Memoriam:

Dr. Kathryn E. Barnard, an American Academy of Nursing Living Legend, died Saturday, June 27. She was 77.

Barnard was an internationally recognized pioneer in the field of infant mental health and a renowned researcher, teacher and innovator.

“Dr. Barnard was a visionary nurse scientist who believed deeply that every child not only has the right to early nurturing relationships, but also that those relationships are the foundation for life-long healthy development,” said Dr. Azita Emami, Robert G. and Jean A. Reid dean of the UW School of Nursing. “This belief inspired her landmark research and compelled her to provide tools and professional development to infant and early childhood mental health practitioners so that every child could experience the best possible start.”

After receiving her master’s degree from Boston University, she was recruited to the University of Washington in 1963, where she stayed until her retirement in 2006. She was instrumental in generating a national movement toward investigating and emphasizing maternal child health issues and the importance of the infancy period.

Barnard earned her Ph.D. in Ecology of Early Childhood Development from the University of Washington in 1972. During her dissertation, she became interested in how an incubator could help a baby maintain more mature patterns of sleep through simulating rocking and heartbeat. She developed a rocking bed and found that rocking improved infants’ weight gain and motor and sensory functions.

Today, rocking chairs are standard in hospital nurseries and neonatal intensive care units, and both parents and caregivers are encouraged to rock the tiny infants. Barnard said this success with early intervention was one of her proudest personal contributions to the field of child development.

Barnard continued to promote infant mental health nationally throughout the 1980s, joining the nascent organization the National Center for Clinical Infant
Programs, which is now ZERO TO THREE, and serving on an advisory group of the National Institutes of Mental Health. She was instrumental in the development and publication of the Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood (also known as the DC:0-3).

“Babies everywhere have lost one of their foremost champions,” said Matthew Melmed, Executive Director of ZERO TO THREE. “Dr. Barnard was committed to putting research into practice to improve the lives of babies. Her fearless determination helped shape public policy and promote the special and sensitive relationships that exist between parents and their babies. Dr. Barnard served on our Board for 37 years – including one term as President – and ZERO TO THREE is honored to continue her legacy through the work we conduct every day.”

In lieu of flowers, Dr. Barnard requested that gifts be made to the Kathryn E. Barnard Endorsement Fund at the Washington Association of Infant Mental Health. Visit wa-aimh.org for more information.

Click here to read the full obituary.

Fellow Achievements:

Ann Kurth, PhD, RN, MPH, FAAN, will be the next dean of the Yale School of Nursing. Her appointment is effective Jan. 1, 2016. Kurth is an expert on global health and is currently at New York University.

“Ann Kurth’s long trajectory of personal and professional accomplishments in both the academic and global spheres makes her eminently qualified to lead the Yale School of Nursing as it continues to expand its educational, research, and clinical programs in its new, state-of-the-art facilities on West Campus,” said Yale University President, Peter Salovey. "Her leadership in promoting health care around the world fits in ideally with the YSN mission of promoting better health for all."

Kurth is an alumna of the Yale School of Nursing, having earned her master’s degree in nursing (specializing in midwifery) here in 1990.

Jose Alejandro, PhD, MBA, RN-BC, CCM, FACHE, FAAN, received the Case Manager of the Year Award from the Care Management Society of America at their annual conference in June. The recipient of the annual award is an individual whose notable contributions and exceptional dedication have provided a positive vision for the future of CM. This prestigious award recognizes those leadership qualities, both professional and personal, that have encouraged others to develop their own gifts of leadership and whose continuing commitment has shaped the industry.

William J. Puentes, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC, FAAN has been appointed to a 5-year term as the inaugural Brenda B. Brooks Endowed Distinguished Professor of Nursing at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. Dr. Puentes, an AACN/Hartford Building Academic Geriatric Nursing Capacity Postdoctoral Fellowship alumnus, has focused his research and clinical practice in geropsychiatric
nursing. In his new position, he will continue his research as well as work on community outreach activities with local populations including the Lumbee Indian tribe.