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Fellow recognized in Hartford Courant for outstanding achievement, appointment

In February, Linda Schwartz was reappointed the Connecticut State Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Affairs

Washington, DC (March 9, 2011) – Since 2003, American Academy of Nursing (AAN) Fellow Linda Schwartz has fulfilled the role of Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs, advocating for the care of nearly 280,000 veterans, while weathering gubernatorial term limits.

As the Academy looks to implement the recommendations related to leadership embedded in the Institute of Medicine Report, "The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health," Schwartz epitomizes how nurses can assume leadership positions and improve the treatment for those that need it most. AAN applauds her selection and lauds the decision as a triumph for the profession.

Highlights from Schwartz's near eight-year journey are chronicled in a March 5 article in the *Hartford Courant*: "Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs Gets Bipartisan Praise."

From the Courant.

ROCKY HILL — Linda Schwartz remembers well that first week as commissioner of the Department of Veterans Affairs following her appointment in May 2003.

On her first day, she was alerted that a patient receiving oxygen at the decrepit veterans' hospital had lit a cigarette, accidentally setting himself on fire.

On the following day, 84 employees who had accepted an early retirement incentive offered by Gov. John Rowland left their jobs.

Then, down to one doctor and no personnel director, the state auditors arrived.

A U.S. Air Force nurse during the Vietnam War, the disabled survivor of a 1983 midair training mishap, the holder of a doctorate in public health from the Yale School of Medicine, Schwartz had met and overcome her share of challenges.

But during those early days in Rocky Hill, she questioned whether she had made the right choice in leaving an academic post at the Yale School of Nursing to take the job of heading a department that, two months into the Iraq War, needed critical care.

"I really hadn't moved out of my desk at Yale. Perhaps I can go back," Schwartz said, recalling conversations she had with her husband and others.

She chose to stay, and nearly eight years later, it is a job she still holds.

[Click here to read the rest of the story.](#)

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The American Academy of Nursing (www.aannet.org) anticipates and tracks national and international trends in health care, while addressing resulting issues of health care knowledge and policy. The Academy's mission is to serve the public and nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge.