



# American Academy of Nursing

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## **Deborah Reed is Designated an American Academy of Nursing Edge Runner for Farm Dinner Theatre**

*Innovative Nurse Model Turns Real Life Farm Experiences into Plays to Improve Senior Farmers' Health*

**Washington, D.C. (October 31, 2018)** — The American Academy of Nursing today recognizes Deborah Reed, PhD, MSPH, RN, FAAOHN, FAAN as an American Academy of Nursing Edge Runner for her model, Farm Dinner Theatre. Edge Runners are nurses who have designed innovative models of care or interventions which improve health, impact cost, and influence policy.

The average age of farmers in the United States is 58 and many current farm operators are lifelong farmers who grew up working on their family farms and who will continue to work until their failing health forces them from their labor. Farmers experience higher incidence of arthritis, hearing loss, hypertension, skin cancer, cataracts, musculoskeletal disorders, and nonfatal and fatal injuries compared to other occupations.

Dr. Reed's Farm Dinner Theatre uses real life stories provided by local farmers at each location as scripts for three short plays which depict the cultural, physical, and spiritual struggles of farming and the health consequences senior farmers confront as a result of this labor-intensive occupation. Between each play, a nurse facilitator leads a focused discussion, so the audience can reflect on and personalize the story and its consequences.

"Farm Dinner Theatre represents the successful combination of nursing science and nursing ingenuity to improve health," said Karen Cox, President of the American Academy of Nursing. "Understanding farm culture and the consequences of family farms being exempt from protective OSHA regulations, Dr. Reed designed a model which raises senior farmers' health awareness and provides them with a path for implementing their own health and safety precautions."

Farm Dinner Theatre is a partnership between the University of Kentucky's College of Nursing, the University of Alabama Institute for Social Science, Cooperative Extension programs in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, and local agricultural communities.

At both two weeks and two months after the theatre intervention, telephone interviews are conducted to assess the extent to which participants have thought about, talked about, or done something about the safety and health issues addressed in the plays. These interviews reveal that at both time intervals, Farm Dinner Theatre participants increased their actions on health and safety by 57% and 60%, respectively.

"I am thrilled to be designated an American Academy of Nursing Edge Runner for Farm Dinner Theatre," said Dr. Deborah Reed. "Nursing's holistic approach to health has enabled me to design a novel program which improves health outcomes while still embracing the strong work ethic and fierce independence of senior farmers."

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**The American Academy of Nursing ([www.AANnet.org](http://www.AANnet.org))** serves the public and the nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge. The Academy's more than 2,500 fellows are nursing's most accomplished leaders in education, management, practice, and research. They have been recognized for their extraordinary contributions to nursing and healthcare.

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