



**Embrace your Now**  
**By Earl A. Salavante DNM, RN**

Every day when we wake up, there is always something that we look forward to whether personal or at the career level. There is always a move for us to make a new step, perhaps a leap for somebody, a motion that urge us so deep that we call it “Change”



Author Dr. Earl A. Salavante and PNA-IN President Mattie Upano

As a transitioning nurse here in the US, it is a challenge to build your nest and adapt to the complexities of the current system. There are moments that you want your routine back but then reality will strike you and remind you of your promise to yourself as you move forward.



PNA-IN Delegates: E. Salavante, S. Gaviola, M. Upano and G. Dela Llana

Part of my transition and things to do was to find an organization that I can join as a member. This is the time that I joined PNA-IN, a chapter of the Philippine Nurses Association of America whose mission is to promote Filipino American nurses' professional growth and provide health information and educational services to the community. A very welcoming organization that provided assistance to new nurses like me here in the USA. I was very lucky to have been introduced to the PNA-IN President and grateful for extending an invitation for me to join a conference on advancing health policy and advocacy organized by the Indiana University School of Nursing, excitement sparks in me that after a few months finally I can get to participate again in a leadership conference.







PNA-IN Colleagues including Maria Reggie Alib, 2<sup>nd</sup> from right



IUSON Dean Robin Newhouse 3<sup>rd</sup> from left and Conference organizer Dr. Sharron Crowder 2<sup>nd</sup> from right





PNA-IN Delegates L-R: M. Upano, S. Gaviola, IUSON Dean R. Newhouse, E. Salavante & G. Dela Llana

The conference entitled “*The Urgency of Now: Advancing Health Policy and Advocacy Through Education, Research, and Leadership*” was organized by Dr. Sharron Crowder at the IU School of Nursing and held last September 15 2023 at the IU Campus Center. This was attended by esteemed faculty, leaders and advocates across the US. Among them were Dr. Lindsey Harris- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellow from Washington DC, Dr. Charles Mathias- Professor and Director for Impact and Innovation, University of Texas Health San Antonio, Dr. Joseph Sakran - Vice Chair of Clinical Operations, Johns Hopkins Hospital Baltimore, Dr. Krista Longtin - Assistant Dean of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development, Indiana University School of Medicine, Dr. Brenda Baker- Director of Policy, American Association of Colleges of Nursing Washington DC, Dr. Susan Hickman- Director Indiana University Center for Aging Research, Regenstrief Institute, and Ambre Marr-State Director, AARP Indiana. The event opened with a warm welcome from the Dean of the School of Nursing Dr. Robin Newhouse and ended with an Ignite Session led by Dr. Sharron Crowder



Panel I L-R: Moderator Sandra Chapman, Dr. Lindsey Harris, Dr. Charles Mathias, & Dr. Joseph Sakran



Panel II L-R: Dr. Susan Hickman, Ms. Ambre Marr, Dr. Brenda Baker, & Dr. Wendy Trueblood Miller





Panel of Speakers with IUSON Conference Organizer Dr. Sharron Crowder (7<sup>th</sup> from left)



Dr. Sharron Crowder with all the Speakers and PNA-IN delegates

PNA-Indiana President Matilde Upano with members of the organization attended the conference wherein she was a member of the IU School of Nursing (IUSON) Conference Planning committee and among the facilitators of the Leadership track We all attended which focused on Leading Health Policy and Bolstering Advocacy in Health Systems, Professional Organizations and on Boards where the PNA-IN President shared her experience and expertise, passion and fruit of labor of the organization in terms of advocacy and involvement in policies related to FENs RN licensure in Indiana. With everything that was shared by her, it was



a proud moment to hear the advocacies of the PNA- IN, the strong voice to make change for the betterment of the stakeholders.



PNA-IN President Mattie Upano, one of the facilitators







Nursing Colleagues from IUSON, University Hospital and Riley Hospital for Children at IU Health



With Dr. Charles Mathias

You can feel the energy in the room as each one shares experience in health policies and advocacies and how their respective organizations cultivate a sense of commitment and engagement among their stakeholders towards changes in legislation. I as well shared some of the current situations happening in the Philippines in terms of the pending Nursing Bill, the exodus of nurses and strategies employed during these times of disruptions. It was a fulfilling moment to share and learn from them and how they achieve momentous milestones in legislations because of unity and commitment

As we participated in the discussions, I felt a sense of connectivity, a feeling of awakening that led me to these realizations and takeaways as well, these are my **AHA! Moments**:

***There is unity in diversity***

Whatever culture, group, organization you may belong to, there is always a binding force that unifies for the common good- and that is the love of profession. Collected and united voices make the biggest impact in these changes in legislation.





### ***Engagement is an ingredient of Collaboration***

While collaboration is an element of successful partnerships and advocacy movements, engagement is a key ingredient that drives organizations and stakeholders towards passion and purpose. Engagement defines the intimate sound of participation towards active change.

### ***Always go back to your Why's?***

Advocacy is built with the person's passion..passion and passion. Unless we find within ourselves the meaning of change, unless we truly understand what we want and what we rightfully believe in there can never be true advocacy. That is why we go back to our why's. Why are we doing these?

### ***It is always a Choice from your Chances***

While the urge to act on issues concerning the nursing profession is strong, there is always a choice. Advocacy is a choice and not imposed. Advocacy is a chance to make a difference, a chance to contribute to change and so we reflect on this as we revisit our choices in life. What will you contribute to change if you have the chance and the choice?

### ***“Now” is a statement***

The urgency of change is dependent on what the system needs, what we need and what must be done. As I hear the advocacies of participants, it resonates a sound of call that cannot and must not be delayed. These emanates from experiences that call for equity and justice in the nursing profession in order to build positive practice environments in every workplace.

As the conference ended, everyone was ignited and challenged to the urgency of now. Some will continue what has been done in health advocacies, some have pledged to join the advocacies for change while some have reflected to consider what matters most now.

As I went back to my everyday life and routine, I brought with me these realizations that as I transition here in the US, with my dreams and aspirations I am part of the system. I will contribute to the Nursing Profession to the best of my ability.

Change happens when there is a force that binds us together, a force defined by unity and liberty, of justice and equity. We can all be an advocate for change, for a better tomorrow for our profession.

**Embrace your “Now” and make a difference!**

