Title:
Mentoring in a Nurse Anesthesia Program: Cultivating Wellness and Developing Leaders

Gloria Chan, BSN¹
Thomas J. Pallaria, DNP²
Michael McLaughlin, MSN²
(1)Sigma Theta Tau International, Brooklyn, NY, USA
(2)School of Nursing, Nurse Anesthesia Program, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark, NJ, USA

Session Title:
Successful Strategies in Mentoring Nurse Leaders
Slot: Q 02: Tuesday, 20 September 2016: 9:00 AM-9:45 AM
Scheduled Time: 9:00 AM

Purpose:
The purpose of this presentation is to understand the rigors of a nurse anesthesia program and the strategies and ways that student driven nurse anesthesia mentorship program promotes wellness in students as well as develops leaders. The presentation will show how to create, effectively implement and maintain a healthy and viable student-driven mentorship program.

Keywords:
Mentoring, Mentorship and Nurse Anesthesia

References:

Abstract Summary:
Participants will learn about the nurse anesthesia program and will understand an effective way of creating and implementing a student driven mentorship program in a graduate level nursing program that endorses student wellness and engages students to become future leaders and participants in professional endeavors.

Learning Activity:

<table>
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<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<td>The learner will be able to understand the structure and rigors of a graduate level nurse anesthesia program, and the necessary need to provide adequate emotional and mental support to the overall wellbeing of students.</td>
<td>The structure of the didactic portion as well as the clinical portion of a nurse anesthesia program will be explained. Particular issues relating to the field of anesthesia in terms of wellness support for students and anesthesia providers will be expanded upon, showing the need to provide emotional and mental support which a mentorship program helps to provide.</td>
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The learner will be able to understand the strategies and resources utilized to create a student-driven mentorship program.

Creation of the mentorship program will be expanded upon. The fundamental structure of a mentorship program along with resources utilized will be explained to learners. Positive and negative aspects of the program as well as trial and error issues that have come up will be presented to learners so that they may be able to replicate a similar program in their own respective nursing program.

Abstract Text:

Nurse anesthetists are considered one of the most difficult and demanding specialties for Advance Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), therefore, nurse anesthesia education and program design is typically rigorous, time consuming and stressful. The nurse anesthesia program at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, requires students to complete 85 credits for their post baccalaureate Nurse Anesthesia/Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, including didactic and clinical courses, with a minimum of 2,500 clinical hours to be completed in order to graduate. This translates to 1-2 days of didactic classes and 3-4 days of 10-12 hours of clinical practicum, with an average of 4-6 hours of studying per day in preparation for class and clinical training. This stressful and grueling schedule provides little time for social interaction, wellness preparation, professional organization involvement and leadership development. Literature states that student registered nurse anesthetists (SRNAs) experience stress due to the stressors of school and the emotional experience of being no longer the expert in the clinical setting; rather they are the novice in a new situation. Studies have shown that stressors SRNAs face are often handled through interaction and support from others.

The development and implementation of a student-driven formal mentorship program is an attempt to increase social interaction between different levels (cohorts) of student registered nurse anesthetists (SRNAs) within the program, help alleviate stress by providing necessary emotional and mental support for wellness among SRNAs, and to instill the philosophy of mentoring early in the student's career which may promote subsequent professional organizational involvement and peer-driven leadership development. The student-driven formal mentorship program receives unconditional support by both program director and assistant program director. Since the implementation of the mentorship program, there has been increased social interaction between the two cohorts (mentors and mentees) and individuals who have shown professional leadership skills are receiving additional and specialized mentorship to continue to develop and maintain the mentorship program for future incoming cohorts.

References:
