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Annual Report: 2025

Academy of Forensic Nursing

2025 AFN Board of Directors

President (January–June 2025)

Paul Thomas Clements, PhD, RN, AFN-C, ANEF, FAAN

Interim President (June–Dec 2025)

Catherine Carter-Snell, PhD, RN, SANE-A, DF-AFN

Interim President-Elect (June–Dec 2025)

Kimberly Kasper, DHSc, ACNP-BC

Past President

Debra Holbrook, MSN, RN, FNE-A/P, SANE-A, DF-AFN, FAAN

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Christine Foote-Lucero, MSN, RN, CEN, SANE-A, SANE-P, AFN-C, IVSE-C, DF-AFN

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Natalie Evenson, MSN, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P, IVSE-C

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Nikol Hamilton, DNP, MSN, APRN, PMHNP-BC, LNC

Antoinette Janson, RN, MSN, SANE-A

Jennifer Johnson, DNP, MSN, APRN, WHNP-BC, AFN-BC, AFN-C, SANE-A, SANE-P, DF-AFN

Rachel Lapp, BSN, RN, TNS, CEN, TCRN, SANE-A

Kasey Magness, MSN, RN

Valerie Sievers, MSN, RN, CNS, AFN-C, IVSE-C, DF-AFN

Anne Troy, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC

Frankie Wallis, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, COI

PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION

Looking back, if 2024 was a building year — 2025 was the breakout season. Throughout 2024, Academy of Forensic Nursing implemented and refined critical processes to ensure accountability, sound structure, and a solid foundation for steady growth. In 2025, we capitalized on that established framework to successfully deliver:

- three regional conferences
- one international virtual conference
- two AFN Intensives
- the first in our first Forensic Nurse Leaders Series
- 19 Wednesday Webinars

Our membership grew by 24.3%. Total assets saw a 27.2% increase over 2024, and AFN's profit saw an outstanding 596.4% jump in 2025 compared to the previous year.

All of this was the result of a dedicated team effort.

Executive Committee

In June, Dr. Paul Thomas Clements stepped down as President. Following the line of succession laid out in the AFN bylaws, President-Elect Dr. Cathy Carter-Snell assumed the role of Interim President until the end of 2025, when she took the formal role of President on January 1, 2026. In June, Dr. Kimberly Kasper was elected by the Board of Directors as Interim President-Elect, and in November the full membership voted her in as President-Elect. Our Past President Debbie Holbrook (2024) stepped down in December after many years of excellent service in AFN leadership. Christine Foote-Lucero continues as Treasurer, and Natalie Evenson continues as Secretary.

Board of Directors (BOD)

The 2025 Board of Directors included:

- Natalie Calow, MSN, RN, CEN, AFN-C (2024–2026)
- Nikol Hamilton, DNP, MSN, APRN, PMHNP-BC, LNC (2025–2027)
- Antoinette Janson, RN, MSN, SANE-A (2025–2027)
- Jennifer Johnson, DNP, MSN, APRN, WHNP-BC, AFN-BC, AFN-C, SANE-A, SANE-P, DF-AFN (2025–2027)
- Rachel Lapp, BSN, RN, TNS, CEN, TCRN, SANE-A (2024–2026)
- Kasey Magness, MSN, RN (2025–2027)
- Valerie Sievers, MSN, RN, CNS, AFN-C, IVSE-C, DF-AFN (2024-2026)
- Anne Troy, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC (2024–2026)
- Frankie Wallis, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, COI (2025–2027)

In addition, two Founding Board Members, Kathy Bell and Dr. Annie Lewis-O'Connor, were appointed to the Board as advisors. For 2026, we said goodbye and thank you to Valerie Sievers and Dr. Anne Troy as Directors, while we welcomed Dr. Victor Petreca and Dr. Andrea Sebastian as the newest members of the board. A special thank you to Natalie Calow and Rachel Lapp for agreeing to renew for one more two-year

term. We are excited to move into 2026 and work with members to be an organization that reflects your values and provides support for your evidence-informed practice.

AFN Staff

Our staff have provided amazing support for all of us. Dr. Angelia Trujillo, our Continuing Education Coordinator, has ensured we have ANCC Accreditation for all our educational programming, including conferences, Wednesday Webinars, and AFN Intensives. Kristi Mayo is our Marketing Director. Her creativity and skill have kept members informed through newsletters, graphics, facilitation of sponsors and partnerships, and marketing for educational events. Kevin Zaragoza is our technical specialist providing web support and advice to the Board and members. And Jessica Sullivan, our talented bookkeeper/accountant, recently earned recognition as a Certified Bookkeeper from the American Institute of Professional Bookkeepers.

Committees and Special Interest Groups

Our Board and AFN members have generously volunteered time to participate in our many committees and Special Interest Groups. We are a thriving and diverse community, and every member's contribution of their unique skillsets helps the organization become a stronger resource for everyone.

This report is a summary of key work that was accomplished this year—but does not always reflect all the hard work and commitment all have shown. Thank you all.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cathy Carter-Snell
AFN President

FINANCIAL REPORT

Submitted by Christine Foote-Lucero, AFN Treasurer

In 2025, the Academy of Forensic Nursing continued to advance its mission to expand and inform forensic nursing practice, advancing the field in meaningful and impactful ways. The organization maintained strong financial health, ensuring resources were efficiently directed toward community impact.

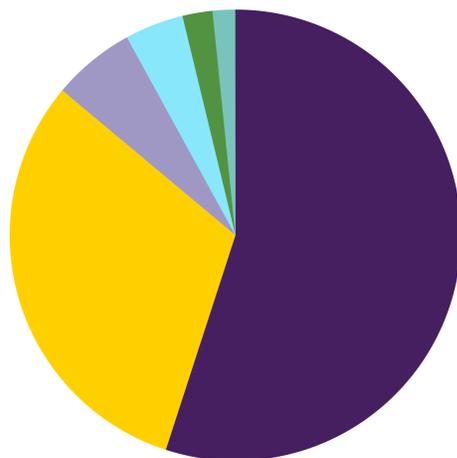
Revenue: Total revenue for the year was \$322,058.28. Major contributions included \$140,375.69 in memberships, \$106,937.50 in conference income, and \$51,286.28 from education via the Learning Management System. Sponsorships provided an additional \$18,100.00.

Expenses: Total expenses amounted to \$224,133.00. Of this, \$123,252.48 (56%) was dedicated to purchased/contracted services (such as staff). Conference expenses equated to \$69,717.26.

Net Profit: The organization closed the year with a positive net profit of \$96,745.28, an increase of 596.4% from 2024. This incredible profit margin ensures stability and flexibility for future initiatives within the organization.

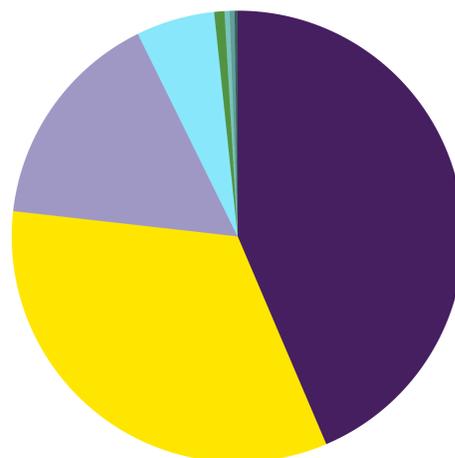
Assets: At the close of the year, assets totaled \$441,388.34 (a 27.2% increase from \$346,925.81 at close of 2024). Overall, Academy of Forensic Nursing remains financially stable and mission driven. Fiscal transparency and accountability continue to be priorities as we plan for continued organizational growth and development.

Expense Summary – 2025



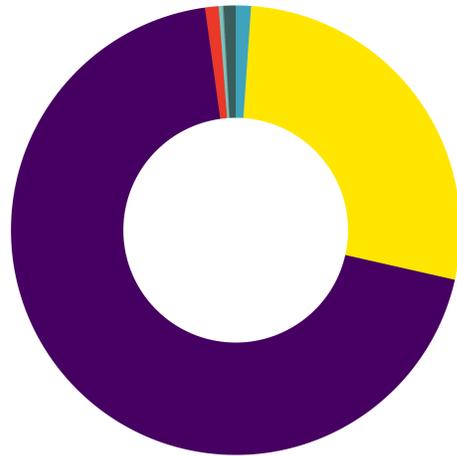
- Purchased Services (123252.48)
- Conferences (69717.26)
- Other Expenses (13279.59)
- Merchant Service Fees (9424.84)
- Insurance (4832.65)
- Marketing (3451.69)
- Supplies (174.49)

Income Summary – 2025



- Membership (140375.69)
- Conference Registration (106937.5)
- Education (51286.28)
- Sponsorship (18100)
- Marketplace (2360)
- Consulting (1157.81)
- Tax (1137.22)
- Interest (703.78)

Summary of Assets – Year End 2025



BoA Checking	(4841)
BoA Savings	(0.25)
WF Checking	(121139.22)
WF Savings	(305771.18)
Accts. Rec.	(4295)
Undeposited Funds	(1118.34)
Prepaid	(403.35)
Marketplace Inventory	(3820)

Financial Oversight Committee

This year, we added a new advisory committee: the Financial Oversight Committee. This group is chaired by the Treasurer, and in addition to the Executive Committee, has three members who were selected from a pool of applicants based on their knowledge and experience in financial management, accounting, governance, and nonprofit administration. Their role is to meet quarterly, review the spending decisions of the Board of Directors, and make recommendations for responsible revenue generation and expenses. One of their first activities was to recommend to the Education Committee a reasonable spending budget for conferences.

JOURNAL

Submitted by Theresa Fay-Hillier (Interim Editor-in-Chief) & CJ Carter-Snell (Editor-in-Chief)

Journal Information

The *Journal of the Academy of Forensic Nursing (JAFN)*—a peer reviewed, open-access journal with no publishing fees—is published three times a year. It focuses on evidence-informed practices through sharing current research and innovations in practice perspectives. Recurring sections include the findings of the Journal Committee, who evaluate the quality of research in selected articles, case studies, and community updates. The journal has editing cutoff dates at the end of March, July, and November. The issue comes out soon after the cutoff date.

Change in Editorial Staff

With CJ Carter-Snell taking over the role of AFN President in June, it was necessary to have at least one associate editor step in to take over during her term. Theresa Fay-Hillier and Paul Thomas Clements were appointed as co-editors-in-chief until her presidency is complete. Victor Petreca moved from section editor to join Annie Lewis-O'Connor as an associate editor. Jennifer Johnson remained as section editor of “Practice Perspectives” in collaboration with Teresa Devitt-Lynch. This is the third year of publication for JAFN. The readership continues to grow, and the quality of articles remains high. The read reports show significant interest in the articles and information contained in the journal.

Issues Published

There were three issues published in 2025 (Volume 3): Spring, Summer, and Fall/Winter

A total of 31 articles were published in 2025:

- Research articles – 12
- Practice perspectives – 7
- Case studies – 3
- Research reviews – 3
- Editorials/final notes – 6
- Community updates – 5

Read Reports

The “read reports” were compiled from Fall 2024–Summer 2025. The Fall/Winter 2025 issue was published in early December, not allowing sufficient time to evaluate the read reports for the Annual Report. For this reason, read reports cover the Winter 2024 issue to the Summer 2025 issue.

Abstracts

Total Abstracts Read: 24,038

Most-Read Abstracts:

1. Speck, et. al. (2024) Delphi Study and Qualitative Analysis to Establish Domains, Core Competencies, and Content in Forensic Nursing Pedagogy. JAFN, 2(2) — **Abstract Reads: 1,718**
2. Bell (2025) Then and Now: Thirty Years Through the Eyes of Patients Who Have Experienced Rape. JAFN 3(1) — **Abstract Reads: 1,574**
3. Downing, et. al. (2024) Wellbeing and Burnout of Nurses Undergoing Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Education Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic. JAFN, 2(2) – **Abstract Reads: 1,378**
4. Charles, et. al. (2024) Mock Testimony Simulation: Innovative Teaching Methodology for Forensic Nurses and Prosecuting Attorneys. JAFN 2(2). – **Abstract Reads: 1,255**
5. Ellis, et. al. (2024) Psychiatric Deprescribing: Case Studies and Clinical Implications in Forensics. JAFN 2(2) – **Abstract Reads: 1,197**

Full Articles Read: 13,713

Most-Read Articles:

1. Bell (2025) Then and Now: Thirty Years Through the Eyes of Patients Who Have Experienced Rape. JAFN 3(1) – **Article Reads: 1,218**
2. Carter-Snell (2025) International Special Interest Group-SIG. JAFN 3(1) – **Article Reads: 832**
3. Smith (2025). TAANA Annual Conference in Phoenix, AZ. JAFN 3(2) – **Article Reads: 771**
4. Miller & Kasper (2025) The Evolution of DNA and its Impact on Sexual Assault Case Prosecution. JAFN 3(2) – **Article Reads: 742**
5. Petreca (2025) The Comfort of Madness: How Society's Need to Pathologize Violence Undermines Justice and Stigmatizes Mental Illness. JAFN, 3(2) – **Article Reads: 732**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Bylaws Committee

It was identified that the original bylaws had become complex. We need to continuously revisit and update our bylaws, but at the same time ensure they are concise and reflect our current values and activities. AFN's lawyer helped create a template for not-for-profit organizations. Annie Lewis-O'Connor and Kathy Bell have co-chaired this committee, working with the Board of Directors and Executive Committee to adapt them to our organization. They have done an incredible amount of work guiding us through this major revision. A draft should be available in Spring 2026 for comment and revision by members and, when ready, a vote to adopt them.

Education Committee

The Education Committee is chaired by Natalie Evenson and co-chaired by Kathy Bell, with staff support from Angelia Trujillo. This was the first year the AFN Education Committee planned and coordinated all the regional conferences. We had three very successful regional conferences in 2025, starting off with Atlanta, Georgia where we had two tracks (one adult and one pediatric), followed by the Chicago, Illinois conference in July where we held a didactic-only strangulation education training before the main conference. The final regional conference of the year was held in Tacoma, Washington, where we rolled out a one-day didactic and hands-on strangulation skills competency training day. The pre- and post-conference strangulation trainings are part of an evolving pilot project that will be continued in 2026. We rounded out the year with the AFN International Virtual Conference.

During 2025, AFN hosted 19 bi-monthly Wednesday Webinars. We released the Adolescent Intensive, created by the Pediatric Special Interest Group, and a Firearm Violence Intensive led by Christine Foote-Lucero and other subject-matter experts.

Strangulation Subcommittee: In 2025 we started to trial a new process by putting out a call to the AFN membership searching for subject-matter experts to work on creating a strangulation competency training as part of the evolving pre- and post-conference strangulation training. The plan is to further develop a strangulation training that will be offered at our regional conferences. We had an overwhelming response, and based on double-blinded reviews, we chose the top applicants to sit on the Strangulation Subcommittee.

The Strangulation Subcommittee has been working diligently and is in the process of creating an eight-hour didactic training that will be available for purchase as a stand-alone training; those who wish to attend the post-conference hands-on competency training must view the content prior to the post-conference date.

Leadership Intensive: We put out a call to the AFN membership looking for members interested in participating in creating a leadership intensive. The Leadership Subcommittee is a strong group of individuals who are creating content focusing on positive and collaborative leadership. This could be a jumping-off point to further educational opportunities.

With the assistance of the Financial Oversight Committee, we have created a conference budget that has been approved by the BOD.

Future Plans-2026 and Beyond

- We are planning the **AFN Indy Regional Conference** in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 22–23, 2026, with the anticipated rollout of the Strangulation Subcommittee’s product for the post-conference training on July 24.
- September 22–23, 2026, we are planning **AFN Tucson Regional Conference**, also with the plan to hold the strangulation post-conference day on September 24.
- The third conference of 2026 will be the **AFN International Virtual Conference**, November 5–6, 2026.
- We put out a call to the AFN membership searching for participants to create a **Trauma Informed Intensive**. This will be a deeper dive into the use of trauma-informed care from a forensic nursing perspective. Anticipated rollout is mid- to late-2026.
- The Education Committee has discussed many other opportunities to make AFN an **inclusive and welcoming place** for all. The calls to membership were intended to encourage members to become more active and share their expertise.
- We are working with the **Forensic Nursing Certification Board (FNCB)** to see how AFN can collaborate and support FNCB certifications and micro-certifications by creating educational content. We are discussing the creation of test-prep education for sexual assault education across the lifespan, and human trafficking micro-certifications.
- **Conference planning for 2027** is underway, looking at potential regional conference locations for 2027.
- The Education Committee discussed and agreed that the **Podcast Committee** should be included in the Education Committee, as there is much crossover of guests and the few committee members already serve on both committees.

Podcast Committee

The Podcast Committee is chaired by Kathy Bell. The group is responsible for the production of AFN’s Bell Work Talks podcast, featuring in-depth interviews with experts dealing with various contemporary trends of practice issues facing forensic nurses and their allies.

Nine podcasts were uploaded in 2025. Topics included:

- Making the Business Case for Forensic Nursing Care
- Turning Risk into Response: DVHRT Approach to Intimate Partner Homicide Reduction
- From Kit to CODIS: Comparing DNA Yields from Blind Swab vs. Speculum Collection
- Conversations with Patients: Integrating Pet-Related Questions and Resources
- Working with Autistic Children Who Experienced Trauma from a Social Therapy Perspective
- Harm Reduction in the Context of Forensic Nursing
- Youth Homelessness
- Silent Struggles: Unveiling Non-Fatal Strangulation in Mental Health Care
- Emergency Department Treatment for Addiction

Podcast Uptake

- Since its first episode on October 17, 2019, a total of 71 episodes of Bell Work Talks have been published. Formal tracking began in January 2023, and since then the podcast had recorded 12,743 downloads as of December 2025.
- Total downloads of 9 episodes posted in 2025: 3,116
- Average audience per episode: 238
- Top countries listening:
 - United States
 - France
 - Canada
 - Germany
 - Morocco

Survey

In November 2024, a listener survey was implemented. This survey is promoted on the podcast page of the AFN website and in every episode. Seven responses have been received.

- Topic suggestions from listener survey received for inclusion next year:
 - Correctional nursing
 - Alternate light source
 - Drug facilitated sexual assault

Membership & Nominations Committee

The Membership & Nominations Committee was chaired by Natalie Calow in 2025. The committee was responsible for overseeing the AFN Distinguished Membership awards, the nomination process for the annual AFN Board of Directors election, and for ensuring healthy growth in AFN membership. The mission of the Membership & Nominations Committee is to maintain strong, diverse, and engaged leadership and membership. Responsibilities include candidate recruitment and vetting, the nomination process, membership development, and member engagement.

Activity in 2025

The Membership & Nominations Committee holds monthly meetings to review AFN membership totals, generate membership recruitment/retention ideas, vet candidates for BOD elections, and present a slate of nominees for the AFN BOD. In 2025, the committee held 11 meetings—January 6, February 3, March 3, April 22, May 29, July 7, August 4, October 6, November 3, and December 1—plus one half-day of Board of Directors candidate interviews on October 24.

To ensure accountability and continual improvement in member services, the committee set actionable goals at its first meeting in 2025:

- **Goal #1 – Increase membership by 10% in 2025.** In 2025, the Membership & Nominations Committee exceeded its goal of increasing membership by 10%, achieving 24.3% growth as membership rose from 948 on December 31, 2024 to 1,178 on December 31, 2025.

- **Goal #2 – Establish a mentorship program with new AFN members.** The goal was met through Board of Directors members personally emailing new AFN members in their area, providing a direct connection to a BOD representative and fostering stronger engagement.
- **Goal #3 – Increase marketing to nursing schools to engage students in the organization.** This goal remains in progress. Marketing efforts have included the creation of flyers for distribution to universities, and while initial steps have been taken, full implementation and outreach are still underway.
- **Goal #4 – Increase marketing to emergency departments.** This goal remains in progress. Marketing efforts have included the creation of flyers for distribution to emergency departments, and while initial steps have been taken, full implementation and outreach are still underway.

Future Directions 2026

1. Continue marketing AFN memberships to students at universities and within emergency departments. Efforts are ongoing, with outreach strategies focused on distributing promotional materials, building connections with faculty and clinical leaders, and encouraging student engagement in the organization.
2. Facilitate the transition of leadership by selecting a new committee chair for 2026.
3. Beginning in 2026, AFN awards and recognitions will be distributed by a newly established committee, the AFN Awards Committee, which is responsible for overseeing the nomination, selection, and presentation of all organizational awards.

President’s Note – This committee has had a dual responsibility. They have not only been looking after nominations yearly, but also the awards. The Board voted to set up a separate awards committee this year, which will not only look after the DAISY Nurse Leader Award in Forensic Nursing, but potentially identify other awards we can provide for our members.

Interprofessional Collaboration Committee (IPC)

The Interprofessional Collaboration Committee, as a standing committee of the AFN, has been meeting since 2019. It is chaired by Valerie Sievers. The working goals of the IPC include:

- Support the ongoing development and outreach of the Academy of Forensic Nursing.
- Identify and discuss forensic practice issues, best practice outcome data, and potential for influence on policy change.
- Facilitate the identification and development of evidence-based position statements that support forensic nursing practice.
- Facilitate collaboration among interprofessional organizations and disciplines that recognize and support forensic nursing.

Current Year Committee Activity

In 2025, the IPC met monthly, except for July and December. Of the 7–8 members of the committee, about 3–7 attend each meeting. The IPC has developed and posted several documents on the AFN website to assist members in the identification and development of position statements as well as a template for submission of proposed position statements. The Interprofessional Collaboration Committee is adjusting the meeting schedule for 2026 to every other month and is discussing various projects—including working with partner organizations such as The American Association of Nurse Attorneys (TAANA) on ethical testimony guidelines; and supporting continued member interest in discussion/education on the topic “Care of Suspects”.

Journal Club

The Journal Club, chaired by Christine Foote-Lucero, was established with the understanding that an outcomes-based emphasis in forensic nursing requires identifying and utilizing best-available evidence to produce safe, quality, and effective patient care. This is accomplished by encouraging and supporting nurse-driven research, utilizing existing forensic and legal research to integrate evidence-based practice, and establishing forensic nursing implications and education that will result in enhanced patient outcomes, patient and forensic nurse satisfaction, and safe and effective high-quality forensic nursing care. While this can be a formidable task for many clinical nurses, the AFN Journal Club serves to review research studies and discuss their implications on evidence-based clinical practice.

Journal Club Goals

- Improve the critical literature review skills of forensic nurses from all disciplines
- Stimulate ideas and best practices that can be used to develop AFN Position Statements
- Improve clinical practice of the forensic nurse caring for patients at the bedside
- Generate suggestions for future forensic nursing research

Activities in 2025

Activity for 2025 included 11 monthly meetings at 12 p.m. ET on the third Thursday of each month, with an average of ten members in attendance at each meeting. A total of 12 articles were reviewed. Final reviews were completed by the chair and submitted for publication in the Journal of the Academy of Forensic Nursing.

Ethics Committee

The committee, chaired by Ecoee Rooney, has drafted a set of ethics guidelines for AFN members. They are currently undergoing further revisions, as we seek to ensure ethics guidelines are integrated from other countries, as well as the International Council of Nurses.

Research Committee

There has been limited activity in this committee this year.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

A complete list of the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) can be found on the AFN website under the About tab > Special Interest Groups. Communications from them can also be found in on the AFN community page, Colleague Café. Please reach out to the chairs or post on the Colleague Cafe if interested in joining. You can also find dates and links to join upcoming meetings in the AFN Event Calendar at: www.goafn.org/eventcalendar

Death Investigation SIG

Chaired by Annette Cannon and co-chaired by Amy Riegert, this SIG meets once monthly on the third Wednesday at 2 p.m. ET. The Death Investigation SIG supports forensic nurse examiners in the application of their knowledge, training, experience, and expertise to investigate causes and manners of death. This SIG is dedicated to the application of evidence-based principles of medico-legal death investigation.

Elder Abuse SIG

Chaired by Debbie St. Germain and co-chaired by Amber Smith, this SIG meets on the fourth Friday of each month at 1 p.m. ET. The Elder Abuse SIG is dedicated to bringing awareness to the incidence of maltreatment and neglect of elderly adults. This SIG is focused on providing education and tools to other healthcare professionals and those involved in the investigation of elder abuse to aide in its prevention.

Harm Reduction SIG

Chaired by Rachel Lapp and co-chaired Stephanie Payne. Meetings are once monthly on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 4 p.m. ET. The Harm Reduction SIG has been focusing on how forensic nurses can address lateral violence in the workplace, as well as some discussions about vicarious trauma experienced from the work that we do as forensic nurses. This group has had some lively discussions between members on how forensic nurses can engage in harm reduction from a professional perspective to reduce compassion fatigue and burnout. A member of the Harm Reduction SIG presented at the Duquesne University Ethics Conference on “Harm Reduction in the Perinatal Patient” in 2025.

Human Trafficking SIG

Chaired by Rosario Sanchez and co-chaired by Lauren Mays, this SIG meets once monthly on the third Tuesday at 7 p.m. ET. The Human Trafficking SIG supports forensic nurses working with trafficking survivors, focusing on providing trauma-informed, evidence-based care.

International SIG

This SIG is currently chaired by Kimberly Kasper. We have members from many countries, including Canada, Portugal, Israel, Switzerland, and Germany.

Activities have focused on finding ways to support international members, including:

- Development of two position statements soon to be sent to members for feedback—one on the role of the forensic nurse in war and conflict, and another on their role in disaster and climate change.

- Finding ways to share emails and contact information for members in case they need support in times of conflict or violence.
- Reaching out to the International Council of Nurses to collaborate on the role of forensic nurses.
- Collaborating on a presentation for the AFN International Virtual Conference in November 2026.

Mentoring SIG

New in 2025, the Mentoring SIG is chaired by Natalie Evenson and co-chaired by Deb Holbrook. The Mentorship SIG was created from a member request at a previous AFN regional conference. This SIG is intended to be a place to seek and/or provide mentorship. We know that many forensic nurses are working in areas with little or no support. This is intended to be a safe space to gain support. The Mentorship SIG is intended for both novice and experienced forensic nurses.

Military SIG

This is a new SIG suggested in December 2025. Two members who have agreed to co-chair and will soon be announced, along with Kimberly Kasper acting as a Board liaison. Military members, active or retired, are welcome to join.

Pediatric SIG

Chaired by Tracey Wagner and co-chaired by Cheryl Wier, the Pediatric SIG meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 2 p.m. ET. Based on member requests, the Pediatric SIG created a five-session Adolescent Intensive, which focuses on the unique medical forensic needs of adolescents and legal considerations. This Intensive included case studies to demonstrate how forensic nurses can implement best practices in the adolescent population.

Rural SIG

The Rural SIG is chaired by Teresa Devitt-Lynch and co-chaired by Olivia Flaherty, and meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. ET. The Rural SIG looks at the special needs, lack of services, and misperceptions in small towns and rural areas when it comes to serving people affected by sexual assault, violence, and trauma.

School Nurse SIG

The School Nurse / Public Health SIG is chaired by Jennifer Barrett and co-chaired by Amanda Bowling. Their meeting times vary, so please reach out to Jennifer Barrett for more information. The School Nurse SIG discusses how school nurses can meet the medical forensic needs of children and adolescents in the school setting. The school nurse plays an important role in connecting children and youth with resources.

Violence & Behavior SIG

Chaired by Anne Troy, this lively group has a very active membership. Each month, different members have been choosing a discussion topic or giving a presentation for the group. In 2025, some of the SIG member presentations included presentations on Mental Health Assessment and NFS, Pedicide, Filicide, Harm

Reduction in Leadership, Family Vlogging, Forensic Psychiatric Nursing and Law Enforcement Partnerships, and Technology-Facilitated Violence. Several members of the Violence & Behavior SIG gave presentations at conferences in 2025, including, “The Forensic Nurse’s Role in Mitigating Harm Resulting from Technology-Facilitated Violence in Marginalized Communities” and “Front Row Seat to Terrorism: Definitions, Typologies, and Coping Strategies for Homegrown Terror.” Several members of this SIG have been accepted to present at the International Academy of Law and Mental Health Congress in Montreal in 2026.

Partnerships and Collaborations

AFN continues to reach out to other organizations to collaborate or partner on various initiatives. This ranges from exhibiting at other organizations' conferences, supporting their educational needs, or offering discounted dual memberships. Examples include:

- **Canadian Forensic Nurses Association (CFNA)**—Dual memberships available.
- **The American Association of Nurse Attorneys (TAANA)**—Dual memberships available. TAANA and AFN also offer reciprocal complimentary advertising at conferences, as well as the opportunity to present or publish in JAFN.
- **Walking Wise**—AFN is proud to partner with Walking Wise, a program developed to provide evidence-based education and awareness for adults and adolescents about child sexual exploitation and trafficking. Through easy-to-follow, interactive modules on the AFN Learn platform, healthcare professionals can earn a total of 12 CE credits and equip themselves to become agents of change within their communities.
- **Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing**—AFN helped develop the content for its Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner Program, an online course designed to provide a comprehensive foundation for providers seeking board certification. The course is offered through the Sigma Nursing Marketplace; a small portion of the profits come to AFN.
- **Symptom Media**—Dr. Jennifer Johnson (AFN Founding Member) and Teresa Devitt-Lynch (AFN member) teamed up with online education provider Symptom Media to develop a series of more than 100 video case studies that cover forensic exams in abuse, assault, and injury scenarios. The series is now offered by Symptom Media, with some proceeds coming to AFN.
- **Forensic Nursing Certification Board (FNCB)**—This independent organization is offering certifications and micro-certifications to forensic nurses in various areas including forensic generalists, strangulation, and sexual violence across the lifespan. While FNCB is a separate organization, AFN provides education that aligns with the FNCB identified content areas, thus assisting our members in their efforts to successfully pass the exams in their area of interest.
- **DAISY Nurse Leader Award in Forensic Nursing**—For the second year in a row, AFN partnered with the DAISY Foundation to offer this award with two nomination categories: Clinical Forensic Nursing Pathfinder and Forensic Nursing Scholar. Our 2025 honorees were Dr. Carolyn Porta (Forensic Nursing Scholar) and Tamara Jackson (Clinical Forensic Nursing Pathfinder). Congratulations!

Strategic Plan Review & Development

At the end of 2025, the Executive Committee and Board of Directors worked to review the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. We managed to accomplish the activities identified and went even further in some areas. (See Strategic Plan 2023–2025 on Pages 17–21.)

Following that review, we made some suggestions for activities over the next two years (2026–2028). These are briefly summarized in the table, Draft: Strategic Plan 2026–2028 on Pages 22–25. Members are asked to reflect on these and contribute their thoughts at the Annual Open General BOD Meeting on February 17, 2026, and in the weeks that follow.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025

Goals	Outcome	Strategies
<p>1. Contribute to the broad acknowledgement of forensic nursing as a specialty through further defining the practice</p>	<p>1. Define and develop the full scope of specialty practice of forensic nursing</p> <p>2. Facilitate accessible education on the application of evidence to the role of forensic nursing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and develop the curriculum for the forensic nurse generalist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not AFN’s role: Must be separate from FNCB as an organization • Supporting the certification process through FNCB partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developed the educational materials to support preparation for FNCB certification • Partner with FNCB to raise awareness of credentialing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Posted in newsletter, JAFN, and provided discounted booth at 2025 conferences • Podcasts, webinars, intensives, publications, and courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provided at least biweekly free webinars to members, along with numerous intensives • Provide ANCC-approved continuing education contact hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formalized the role of the CE coordinator on staff and support their work • Support the development of forensic nursing globally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Created the International SIG in 2023

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025

<p>2. Advance, support, educate and collaborate in forensic nursing practice research and scholarship</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop evidence-based position statements to inform practice and legislation Continue 2. Establish committees to support evidence-based practice, research, and scholarship Continue 3. Provide opportunities to expand or disseminate forensic nursing research and practice Continue 4. Expand AFN membership of nurses and multi-disciplinary partners to collaboratively develop forensic nursing knowledge Continue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop evidence-based resources to inform practice and legislation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>JAFN articles, position papers in draft, newsletter information</i> • IPC committee position statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Ongoing</i> • Develop materials to support education on quality of research such as courses and toolkits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Journal Club developed criteria</i> ○ <i>Education Committee and CE coordinator request evidence to support presentations</i> • Establish committees to support evidence-based research and scholarship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Research Committee—Limited activity since 2023, needs to be promoted</i> ○ <i>Journal Club—Regularly meets and publishes reviews in JAFN</i> • Provide opportunities to expand or disseminate forensic nursing research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>JAFN journal</i> ○ <i>2–3 conferences in person per year and 1 virtual</i> ○ <i>Recruit speakers for webinars</i> • Facilitating opportunities for forensic nurses to be introduced to forensic nursing research through mentoring. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>JAFN mentoring now in writing</i> • STM partnership, publication pathways, opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Had an opportunity to partner but the financial burden and risk was too high</i>
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STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025

<p>(continued) Advance, support, educate and collaborate in forensic nursing practice research and scholarship</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand AFN membership of nurses and multi-disciplinary partners to collaboratively develop forensic nursing knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Partnerships with CFNA, TAANA, APSAC, Walking Wise, Sigma Nursing, Symptom Media</i> • Marketing to grow membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Number of members growing each year</i> • International scholarships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Some were offered in 2023–24 but less now (also price-adjusted membership for lower economic areas so may have less need)</i>
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STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025

<p>3. Communicate the relevance and importance of forensic nursing to advance health equity, social justice, and the reduction of violence and trauma</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote education that is evidence-based and trauma informed 2. Promote inclusion of trauma-informed principles into activities and outputs 3. Collaboration and communication of nursing strategies focused on prevention and early intervention with violence and trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring education that is evidence based <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Checks put in place with educational guides • Ensuring education sessions include a discussion of quality of evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Included in speaker guidelines ○ Developed an educational guideline and template that incorporates current research, relevant articles, and references for all educational activities • Support and host events that raise awareness and visibility of forensic nursing and Academy of Forensic Nursing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2–3 conferences a year ○ Booths at EVAWI and other nursing conferences • Completion and review of AFN educational planning form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forms in place and required before each presentation • Promote inclusion of trauma-informed principles into activities and outputs (education, research) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Presentation completed and at least one publication. Needs to be further integrated into activities, perhaps a TIC Intensive (call has gone out for contributors) • Collaboration and communication of nursing strategies focused on prevention and early intervention with violence and trauma. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vague. Develop focus on primary prevention (e.g. Harm Reduction SIG), webinars
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STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025

<p>(continued) Communicate the relevance and importance of forensic nursing to advance health equity, social justice, and the reduction of violence and trauma</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the development and dissemination of nursing strategies to prevent or reduce violence and trauma or its effects<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Somewhat vague but violence prevention has been a focus of some education • Effectively use social media to share information and disseminate information about nursing strategies<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Not really our role. Perhaps focus instead to “share and disseminate information about the activities and status of the organization”
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DRAFT: STRATEGIC PLAN 2026–2028

Goals	Outcome	Strategies
<p>1. Strengthen recognition of forensic nursing as a specialty</p>	<p>2. Promote Forensic Nursing Certification Board (FNCB) competencies</p> <p>3. Raise awareness of scope and standards</p> <p>4. Improve awareness of forensic nursing in various venues (e.g. undergrad, other communities)</p> <p>5. Support certification as an aspect of AFN values—not just FNCB, but with other countries’ certifications—and improve certification uptake</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop repository of materials addressing various competencies and practice pillars, practice guidelines • Standards: Continue contributing to the Forensic Scope and Standards document • Universality: Ensure FNCB content not only reflects their competencies but consider members outside the U.S. as applicable • Offer to speak to universities, nursing/healthcare agencies, and law enforcement agencies about the value of certifications for forensic nurses • Continue to market certification information from FNCB and other agencies
<p>2. Advance, support, educate and collaborate in forensic nursing practice research and scholarship</p>	<p>1. Develop evidence-based position statements to inform practice and legislation Continue</p> <p>2. Establish committees to support evidence-based practice, research, and scholarship Continue</p> <p>3. Provide opportunities to expand or disseminate forensic nursing research and practice Continue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop additional evidence-based resources to inform practice and legislation (e.g. advocacy resources) • Update and expand Interprofessional Collaboration Committee position statements • Develop materials to support education on quality of research, such as courses and tool kits, updating as needed

DRAFT: STRATEGIC PLAN 2026–2028

<p>2. (continued) Advance, support, educate and collaborate in forensic nursing practice research and scholarship</p>	<p>4. Expand AFN membership of nurses and multi-disciplinary partners to collaboratively develop forensic nursing knowledge Continue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain committees to support evidence-based research and scholarship • Recruit and promote membership in the Research Committee • Market and support activities of the Journal Club • Continue to provide opportunities to expand or disseminate forensic nursing research (JAFN/conferences/webinars) Continue • Facilitate opportunities for forensic nurses to be introduced to forensic nursing research through mentoring. JAFN mentoring now available— Research Committee could assist with this • Continue to seek and expand AFN membership with multi-disciplinary partners to collaboratively develop forensic nursing knowledge • Continue marketing to grow membership, including outreach to new members by current members in their state or country • Raise awareness of international scholarships for new partners, or those from countries challenged by affordability
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DRAFT: STRATEGIC PLAN 2026–2028

<p>3. Communicate the relevance and importance of forensic nursing to advance health equity, social justice, and the reduction of violence and trauma</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote education that is evidence-based and trauma informed 2. Promote inclusion of trauma-informed principles into activities and outputs 3. Collaboration and communication of nursing strategies focused on prevention and early intervention with violence and trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure education is evidence-based through webinar and publishing guidelines; peer review • Ensure education sessions include a discussion of quality of evidence (webinar and presentation criteria include this criteria) • Continue to support and host events that raise awareness and visibility of forensic nursing and Academy of Forensic Nursing • Continue to offer CEUs and meet certification requirements, including completion and review of AFN educational planning form and ensuring there is an ANCC-approved coordinator • Provide presenters with a template that incorporates current research, relevant articles, and references for all educational activities • Promote inclusion of trauma-informed principles into activities and outputs through communications, and development of a TIC Intensive working group • Where appropriate, trauma-informed principles should be integrated into policies, education, and research. (Not really established—Continue to find strategies to expand this, e.g. in educational guidelines) • Collaboration and communication of nursing strategies focused on prevention and early intervention • Develop a focus on primary prevention (e.g. Harm Reduction SIG); emphasize focus in webinars
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DRAFT: STRATEGIC PLAN 2026–2028

<p>3. (continued) Communicate the relevance and importance of forensic nursing to advance health equity, social justice, and the reduction of violence and trauma</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development and dissemination of nursing strategies to prevent or reduce violence and trauma or its effects. Continue • Effectively use social media to share information and disseminate information about the activities and status of the organization
<p>4. Accountability to membership</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure members have access to relevant information about the activities of AFN 2. Identify priorities from members for future activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaws: Finish draft and send to membership for input, final revision (2026) • Update procedures/policies to align with revised bylaws • Annual Open General BOD Meeting and Annual Report in February each year • Revise confidentiality / nondisclosure agreement for the Board ensuring members are kept informed as much as possible of activities. Confidential items will be limited to items such as those that may be legally sensitive • Post annual reports and audits to member website • Conduct a membership survey • Conduct annual audits starting in 2026 and report results to membership • Continue with Financial Oversight Committee, seeking new members as needed