

Special remarks by Dr. Michael Rieker at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center
Nurse Anesthesia Program commencement. August 16, 2009.

This is an auspicious occasion, because this year's graduation represents a significant anniversary. 40 years ago, on April 1, 1969, a young anesthetist sat with her graduating class in Davis Chapel, eagerly waiting for Helen Vos to hand her one of these diplomas which would set her onto a career as a nurse anesthetist; something she had been intrigued with since her childhood, observing the town's anesthetists. Helen wrote on her final transcript that this graduate always went the extra mile, and she summarized by writing "Performance was excellent from the very beginning. *Should* do excellent work."

Helen may not have known how prophetic her words were, for starting out exactly where you are today, was certainly one of the greatest examples of excellent professional performance and dedication to anesthesia education; my predecessor, Sandy Ouellette. Without doubt, one of the greatest characteristics of the education of these graduates is that they received a significant portion of their education from this person, who is truly an icon in our profession. Sandy served as AANA president in 1988 and chaired the National Commission on Nurse Anesthesia Education, as our profession moved to a graduate education framework. More recently, she chaired the AANA's DNP task force, as we take the next significant step in educational standards. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, and a recipient of the Agatha Hodgins award from the AANA. She represented the AANA at the founding of the International Federation of Nurse Anesthetists 20 years ago, and then went on to become its president; a position from which she advocates for quality education and safe practice of nurse anesthetists globally. It is with my deepest appreciation for her ongoing support of our program and its students, and certainly for her mentorship and collegiality, that I recognize Sandy Ouellette for 40 years of dedicated service to North Carolina Baptist Hospital: our students, our program, and our profession.



Presented to

Sandra Ouellette

CRNA, M.Ed., FAAN

by the Wake Forest University

Baptist Medical Center

Nurse Anesthesia Program

on the 40th anniversary

of your graduation,

in appreciation of your

dedicated service

to the program and to the profession.

August 16, 2009

“To teach is to touch a life forever”

