




## *From the President*

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### **A Glance Back and Focus Forward**

It has been a busy and demanding year for all of us. Nursing is experiencing many shortages of staff and energy, while our patients are increasingly more complex with many comorbidities. At the same time, economic challenges are negatively impacting many businesses and institutions. Forensic nurses have been impacted in our places of work and with our professional associations, or even ability to maintain our memberships with financial pressures. We at the Academy of Forensic Nursing are honored that you have chosen to be members with us and want to ensure we meet members' needs.

Our annual report will be published on the website by the end of January, and we invite all of you to our annual general meeting to discuss the report and ideas for our strategic plan. The virtual meeting will be held on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 4 pm EST (the link will be in the January newsletter). Our conferences have been successful- while smaller than many conferences we value this smaller size to facilitate networking and mentorship among participants. We have participated in the development of video resources for forensic nurses through Symptom media, updated an online sexual assault examiner course through Sigma Theta Tau, continue to offer a high-quality journal with no publication or subscription fees to members, regular webinars free to members with CE credits, and are exploring affordable options for AFN labelled merchandise. We have introduced a Financial Oversight Committee to ensure we are making sound decisions with your membership dues, and we are showing steady growth in our finances. All great work thanks to the Board of Directors, volunteers on committees, staff, and executive as well as from member suggestions.

As we move into 2026, we are evaluating our 2023-2025 strategic plan and formulating our plan for the next two years. It is important that we have your voice and advice for future directions. We know you are busy, but this is your Academy and we want to ensure it reflects what you value in your professional development and support. Share your voice and let us continue to grow in supporting your evidence-informed practice. Your voice is also important in our committees, special interest groups and on an ongoing basis.

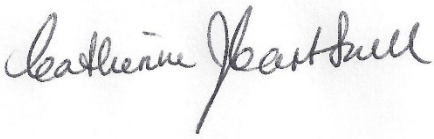
At the same time as asking for your involvement, I would also like to emphasize you strive for some balance. We are in this profession for the long haul and need to remain healthy. In

## PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

her editorial, Dr. Fay-Hillier has emphasized the importance of self-care. This is hard to attend to when we are balancing many responsibilities at home and at work. Finding balance and connections are important to your health. Many of us belong to diverse organizations, forensic or otherwise, and these are all a part of our connectedness. Collaboration between organizations and individual forensic nurses strengthens the profession and provides mentorship and peer support in our challenging work. We hope to be a key connection for you in the coming year in networking, mentorship and professional development.

The holiday season can be stressful and often sad for many. It also is a time that we see violence and trauma. It is our hope that you find a way to have a safe and happy holiday season, however you celebrate. Thank you for all you!

Cathy (CJ)

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Catherine Yeatman". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.