

**2024 AANA Ira Gunn Award for Outstanding Professional Advocacy
Kimberly Gordon, DNP, CRNA, CCRN, CPN**

What an honor to have your name mentioned in the same breath as “Ira Gunn”!

In 1987, Ira wrote an editorial citing laws, regulations, and a 1970 position statement from the **A-M-A** supporting anesthesia as the practice of nursing and medicine. Anyone who knows me knows how much I love a law or regulation – it begins:

“Anesthesiology is a recognized specialty within both the nursing and medical professions. The practice of anesthesia by a nurse constitutes the practice of nursing.”

The premise of that editorial is why, I believe, CRNA practice is so vital to protect: we bring a unique, valuable, and important perspective to healthcare (and policymaking) – nursing. The nursing process is the first thing we learned in our nursing education and what mentors like Sandy Ouellette, Nancy Bruton-Maree, Sherry Harris, Terry Wicks, and countless other CRNA leaders role-modeled for me. It is the foundation of our practice.

If we don’t protect our profession, we **will** lose it. If we don’t tell our story, someone else will. The good news? Nothing is stopping us – we need only decide it is important and choose to do it.

Sandy often says, “We all drink from wells we did not dig” – so start digging – *right now*. Tell your story, mentor a learner, donate to PAC, volunteer at the state or national level, run for elected office, or help CRNAs and nurses who run, win. Choose to be an unstoppable advocate – like Ira.