

SUPPORTING THE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY AND ENDOSCOPY NURSING.

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## *Letter from the President*

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Where did the summer go? It seems like just yesterday I was writing to you about my youngest graduating from high school and just this past week we dropped him off for his freshman year at the University of Iowa. One more college drop off for us in two weeks and then the house will be quiet, beds will be made, clothes will be hung instead of piled, dishes will be in cabinets and not piled high next to the bed, and that being said...I will miss them and their messes too! My daughter will be starting her senior year at Elmira College in Upstate NY, majoring in nursing. I couldn't be more proud of her choice in majors, although she wants a position in pediatrics and not gastroenterology. Perhaps I can change her mind with all of my exciting GI war stories. It is so exciting to watch and mold new nurses and see them grow!

This past July my hospital had its tri-annual accreditation visit from the Joint Commission. As you all know the months leading up to this visit can be stressful, not to mention the visit itself. The visit went amazingly well and what I learned was how prepared and knowledgeable the staff in the endoscopy department are about infection prevention, patient safety, and scope reprocessing. The surveyors were so complimentary about the processes we have in place to ensure we are giving the highest level of care to our patients. I could not be more proud of our team for showcasing the amazing work they do! I am writing this because I wanted to share how SGNA plays a huge part in what we do in our departments.

Take advantage of the SGNA website and the resources it has to offer! I utilize the SGNA website often. SGNA has multiple documents to help guide our practice. Often times I refer to the SGNA standards and practice guidelines, and position statements as a reference for many of things we do in our department. *Standards in Infection Prevention in Reprocessing of Flexible Gastrointestinal Endoscopes* and *Standards of Infection Prevention in the Gastroenterology Setting* are two of the documents that I refer to most when considering much of what we do in our department.

Get involved with SGNA at either the national or regional level. At the national level I serve on the Practice Committee. This committee is charged with reviewing and updating our practice guidelines and position statements based on the current evidence in the literature and best practice. I serve with an amazing group of intelligent, passionate, dedicated women who bring experience from across the country. Being a member of this committee has also helped me to stay up to date with current best practice in GI. There are many opportunities to volunteer at both the national and regional level; reach out to any of our board members for information on volunteer opportunities.

Don't forget to save the date for October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 for our Chicago SGNA Fall into GI Conference at Elmhurst Hospital. We will be celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a region! Stay tuned for some exciting conference anniversary pricing for SGNA members!

Enjoy the last weeks of August,

Amy Granato

Chicago SGNA President

Find us on 

*Save the Date*

for

Fall Into GI

Saturday, October 20, 2018

Elmhurst Memorial Hospital

Registration information Available soon

**\$25<sup>00</sup>**  
**FOR**  
**SGNA MEMBERS**



# Fall Into GI 2018

We'll offer you...

- ✓ Expert Speakers
- ✓ Network with GI Professionals
- ✓ Knowledgeable Vendors for hands-on experience
- ✓ 50/50 Split-the-Pot
- ✓ Raffle Basket to support GI Cancer Charity

Chance to play CE program

“Chicago Endoscopy Cash Cab”

for prizes!



We are looking for groups of 3 to volunteer to take a ride in the Cash Cab! Please contact us at [www.chicagosgna.org](http://www.chicagosgna.org) or message us through our Facebook page with your contact information.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## VALERIE RICKEN

I have been a nurse for 27 years and obtained my BSN from NIU and my certification in 2015. Currently I am the Clinical Coordinator at Rush Copley GI/Pain/IVF Center. In my spare time I enjoy boating, being outdoors, traveling, and spending time with my family. I am married and have two boys, my youngest is going to college this year. While my boys were in high school, I had been very active volunteering for the Sports Boosters and being a "Team Mom". As each of my sons graduated high school, I adopted a new puppy. This adds a great deal of training to do after my work day now having 3 dogs....ugh what was I thinking? The puppies are keeping me busy, however I finally realized that I am at a point in my life that I want to grow professionally in my practice and the Chicago SGNA was just the ticket to accomplish that goal.



I had previous experience working pre/post for GI early in my career but did not work exclusively in GI until 6 years ago. I had never anticipated that I would be a GI nurse; I just fell into this job opportunity. I now find it is one of the best decisions that I ever made because I love my job! I am active within my organization helping to promote colon cancer awareness and helping to organize a public event held at Rush Copley Medical Center every March. It still amazes me how many people fear having a colonoscopy, a procedure which I have seen save so many lives by detecting colon cancer early. I continue to strive to educate the public and calm their fears so that we continue to get more people to have this potential lifesaving procedure. There are so many opportunities within my organization and community to reach out to the public to help educate them. Not to mention that the technology and innovations that are continually improving to treat different GI disease processes are amazing.

I am proud to say that I have my certification and that by obtaining it I learned so much about GI and the human body in the process. I attended my first Annual SGNA Conference in 2016 and that was a game changer for me. I enjoyed the conference immensely, not only for the great educational offerings but also for the networking opportunities with other nurses from across the country. I spoke with one of the SGNA board members at that time and she encouraged me to become more active in my local chapter. I have attended the Spring and Fall Chicago SGNA educational offerings; however, it took me about 1 1/2 years to finally attend my first Chicago SGNA meeting. I find that like many other nurses/mothers that we tend to feel like we just do not have the time to be an active member in a local chapter. When I finally made the leap and attended my first Chicago SGNA meeting, I found it was a fabulous experience. I met great people and I realized that I should have done this a long time ago. I found out that as a volunteer I can give as much or as little time to the group depending on what works with my personal life and obligations. I am glad that I finally made the leap and I am encouraging my co-workers to come with me to the next meeting. I highly encourage anyone that is interested in becoming more active and growing their professional practice to consider attending a local chapter meeting.

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# Interview with National SGNA Course Scholarship winner Laurie Polakoff

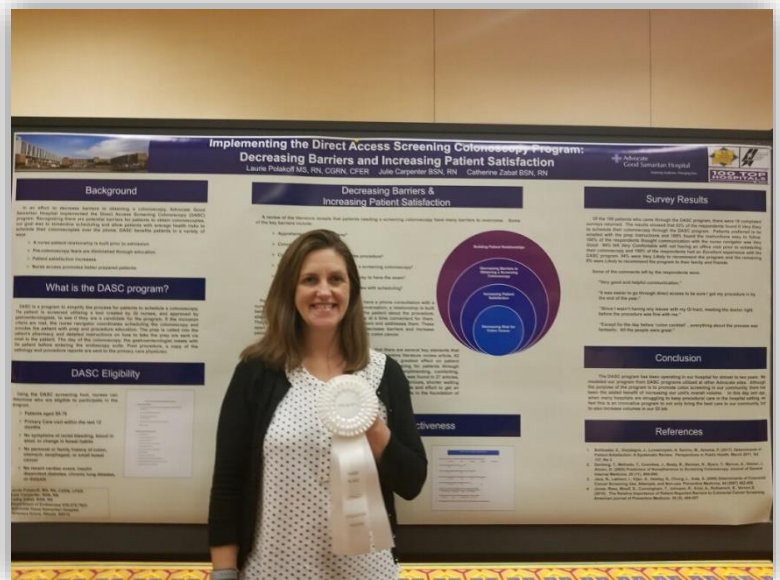
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**How did you become interested in GI?**

I have been a GI nurse for 8 yrs. I sort of landed in GI accidentally. I decided to try something completely new, and thought it would just be for a few years, but I ended up loving it! I am most interested in diseases of the liver, and performing ERCP's, but I also have a strong interest in colon cancer screening and educating the community on it's importance. I have had many family members with a variety of different GI diseases, from colon cancer, to Crohn's disease, to pancreatic cancer...so I guess that's what initially drew me into GI to begin with.

**How has SGNA helped your professional goals?**

SGNA has been very helpful to me in meeting my professional goals. Each year, I attend both Fall and Spring Chicago SGNA conferences. When I was a new GI nurse, the information I learned at these events really helped build my GI knowledge base. As a more experienced GI nurse, I am still learning, and I feel the information at these events help to keep me current with what is going on in our GI community. SGNA also gave me the opportunity to attend the national SGNA conference to present my own research ideas and share them with others through a poster presentation and podium talk. This was an incredible learning experience!



**What has been your proudest achievement so far?**

This may sound cliché, but my proudest achievement so far is raising my children to be kind human beings. They are so amazing and teach me daily about kindness, resilience, & patience. I've learned more from being a parent than I have learned from any other experience in my life. Who knew?

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# *Interview with National SGNA Course Scholarship winner Julie Forsberg*

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## How did you become interested in GI?

When my daughter went to college I wanted to return to a clinical nursing position. I was discussing this with a good friend of mine who was working as a nurse in a GI lab at a different hospital. She thought I would really enjoy GI nursing and encouraged me to look into available positions in endoscopy. As it turns out, I was scheduled for my first screening colonoscopy not long after that. After speaking with the nurses, the day of my colonoscopy, I found there was an open RN position in the GI lab at Good Samaritan Hospital. I applied for the job and have been in the GI lab for the last eleven and a half years. It has been my favorite job in my 43-year nursing career!

## How has SGNA helped your professional goals?

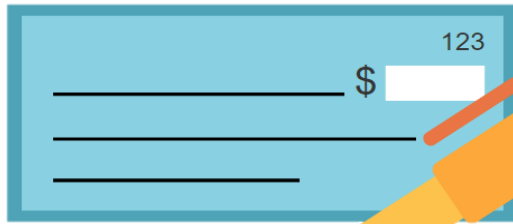
SGNA has provided the basis for quality of care and standards of practice that our department follows. After attending regional and national conferences, it was inspiring to see so many nurses and associates participating in educational and research areas to promote the field of gastroenterology. This was really a catalyst for me to get involved with my co-workers for poster submissions and podium presentations.

## What has been your proudest achievement so far?

In the past I never considered myself a public speaker; in fact, it used to make me very nervous. However, during the course of my years in GI, I developed a special interest in High Resolution Esophageal Manometry studies. A friend and I worked on and presented a motility topic at a Chicago SGNA conference, and it was fun and rewarding. The same friend and I again co-presented this year at the national SGNA conference. I also presented a case study at the same national conference that I had worked on related to a patient with an unusual motility disorder. I was so happy, and proud, that both presentations went so well. It was rewarding to see the interest others have in the same area that I have such a passion for.



Do you like to plan a party?



Would you rather balance a checkbook?

WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR



Do you know how to post on Facebook?

**WE**  **VOLUNTEERS**

Have a few computer skills?



**Please consider volunteering!**

**Contact us @ <http://www.chicagosgna.org>**

**Message us thru Facebook: Chicago SGNA**

**Talk to us at FALL INTO GI on October 20, 2018**



Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates

78 followers

2w



Have you followed SGNA on LinkedIn, yet? Connect with us and stay in the loop on all things [#gastroenterology](#).



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