

## 2009 SNI Conference Highlights

The 15<sup>th</sup> biennial School Nurses International conference was held at Monmouth University this past July. School nurses, and their guests, from fourteen countries participated in a week-long opportunity of sharing their commonalities and differences and had an opportunity to advance their practice of school nursing through participation in a variety of scholarly presentations. This year's theme was "The Universality of School Nursing: The Privilege of Caring for the World's Children." The conference was dedicated to founder, Mary Henley, retired school nurse, who was in attendance; and chaired by Karen Farrell, MEd., BSN, RN-BC of New Jersey and Madalyn Schultz Petit, BSN, RN, NCSN of Delaware.

The keynote address was presented by Mary Vernon-Smiley, MD, MPH of the CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion/Division of Adolescent and School Health, who presented information on improving health and education through coordinated school health programs. A second keynote was given by Judith Coates, RN, MS from Sanofi-Pasteur on Adolescent Immunizations. The endnote address, "Many Cultures, One Voice" was offered by Sandi Delack, MEd., BSN, NCSN, newly elected NASN president. In addition, attendees had the opportunity to choose from twenty-six other presentations, and a poster presentation, which enjoyed its initial offering.

Other highlights of the week included an opening barbecue complete with a bluegrass band where NJSSNA President, Marie Peppas offered welcoming remarks; tours of Monmouth Medical Center and the local Long Branch schools, and a trip to New York City which included a cruise on the Circle Line around Manhattan Island followed by dinner at Tavern on the Green in Central Park. The conference concluded with a reception sponsored by the Marjorie K. Unterberg School of Nursing of Monmouth University followed by a closing banquet with a DJ for the entertainment.

The conference was co-sponsored by the Marjorie K. Unterberg School of Nursing Monmouth University and the planning was assisted by NASN and supported by Delaware School Nurses Association and the New Jersey State School Nurses Association.

The conference was preceded by a guided tour and "working cruise" beginning in Montreal and ending in Boston where a variety of educational offerings were made available and contact hours were awarded.

School Nurses International was started in 1981 by nurses from California and England and has met every two years since. Previous conferences have been held in Denmark, Alaska, Scotland, Singapore, Colorado, Wales, The Netherlands, England, Sweden, and California.

The 2011 SNI Conference is set to open July 25 in Hong Kong. Hope to see you there!

Submitted by Karen Farrell, MEd., BSN, RN-BC  
Co-Chair  
School Nurses International-2009