

## School of Health Professions : Nurse Anesthesia : Media



### Nurse Anesthesia Students & Faculty Visit Legislators in Topeka

The Second Annual Lobby Day was held at the Kansas state capitol in Topeka on January 26, 2010, to coincide with the celebration of National Nurse Anesthesia week.

The purpose was to promote student awareness and participation in political activities that impact CRNA practice. Eight students and two faculty from the University of Kansas nurse anesthesia program, two students from the Newman University anesthesia program, two students from Texas Wesleyan University nurse anesthesia program and two board members of the Kansas Association of Nurse Anesthetists were in attendance.



Led by Tara Brunin, SRNA, Christopher Morrissey, SRNA, and Todd Nason, SRNA, representatives of the student Capstone group on Political Awareness and Advocacy, students and certified nurse anesthetists met with their state legislators to discuss the importance of nurse anesthesia in rural and metropolitan Kansas and to advocate for the profession and protection of practice rights. Preceding their day on the Hill, students were educated on the key legislative issues facing nurse anesthetists in Kansas and nationwide and given a tutorial on how to contact their representatives and senators.



Armed with a myriad of effective lobbying techniques, students met with approximately 15 legislators in individually scheduled appointments throughout the day or while walking them back to their offices and attended a Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee meeting. It was at this meeting that the Chair, Senator Jim Barnett, informed his fellow

committee members of the purpose of nurse anesthesia presence at the Capitol that day and displayed a map showing the large distribution of counties in Kansas that rely solely upon CRNA's for anesthetic care. In addition, Christopher Morrissey was asked to introduce each member of the group and the committee applauded the group's efforts and honored the goal of political awareness and advocacy by all citizens.

The Kansas Association of Nurse Anesthetists held a private luncheon where legislators were invited to join in a more informative roundtable discussion comprised of students and board members. The day was a great success as evidenced by both the legislators who acknowledged their newfound understanding of the importance of nurse anesthesia practice to the citizens of Kansas, as well as by students who became keenly aware of the value and significance of being an active participant in the political issues facing their profession. Kansas Student Nurse Anesthesia Lobby Day is planned as an annual event and students and CRNAs are encouraged to attend next year.

