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**NEWS RELEASE**



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## **Finnin Honored for Nursing Achievement at ANA National Event**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Mary J. Finnin, MS, RN, Suffolk County’s (NY) HIV/AIDS primary care nurse coordinator from 1990 to 2007 and an advocate for nurses’ bargaining rights, received a national award for nursing excellence from the American Nurses Association (ANA), the largest nursing organization in the U.S., at its biennial House of Delegates meeting here.

Finnin, of Central Islip, NY, garnered the ANA Distinguished Membership Award, which recognizes outstanding leadership, participation, and contributions in connection with ANA’s goals. Finnin is a former member of the ANA Board of Directors and served as ANA Treasurer for four years.

“Nursing has provided me with the opportunity to travel and work with the best. The career opportunities are endless and it has been a wonderful life. I recommend it highly as a career for both men and women,” Finnin said in accepting the award.

ANA is honoring 20 nurses for their dedication to the profession and contributions toward improving nursing and health care during the meeting of its governing and policy-setting body.

“Nurses form the backbone of our health care system, yet that often goes unrecognized,” said ANA President Rebecca M. Patton, MSN, RN, CNOR. “Today, we recognize a select group of nurses who epitomize the best of the profession through their commitment to clinical practice, teaching, research and advocacy on behalf of patients and nurse colleagues.”

Finnin led nursing organizations in efforts to advance collective bargaining rights and to promote opportunities for nurses to be represented by their professional nursing associations, in order to provide safe nursing care to patients.

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## **Finnin Wins ANA National Nursing Award/ Page 2. . .**

Finnin started as a staff nurse/head nurse in the New York City Hospital system, before assuming the position of associate director of the New York State Nurses Association's Economic and General Welfare Program from 1964 to 1968. She moved on to work as executive director of the Florida Nurses Association 1968 to 1979 and director of the Massachusetts Nurses Association's Economic and General Welfare program from 1980 to 1985.

Finnin has always been a vocal advocate for the advancement of the profession through education and recognition of clinical practice through specialty certification. She advocated that nurses receive compensation commensurate with their experience and education and employers provide clinical career ladders to retain and recruit the nurses.

In her state nurses association roles, she ran workshops for nurses on workplace and collective bargaining issues; taught nurses political organizing skills; and educated health care administrators and legislators about nurses' role in health care and the need to have representation on workplace issues. She has mentored nurses to serve on local, state and national levels of professional nurse associations.

Finnin devoted the latter part of her career to community health, working 17 years as HIV/AIDS primary care nurse coordinator for the Suffolk County Department of Health Services. She also was active in civic life, serving as a lead author of a report to Suffolk County's executive on improving access to health care for minorities.

Finnin also has a long history of involvement with ANA, having served continuously in the ANA House of Delegates since 1970. She served as a member of the ANA Board of Directors from 1980 to 1988, and treasurer of ANA from 1984 to 1988.

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*The ANA is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's 3.1 million registered nurses through its constituent member nurses associations, its organizational affiliates, and its workforce advocacy affiliate, the Center for American Nurses. The ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the rights of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and by lobbying the Congress and regulatory agencies on health care issues affecting nurses and the public.*