



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

General Inquiries: Cathy Harrison, CRNA, MSN, president, Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists; Mobile: 804.382.0209 president@vana.org

Media Contact: Pamela S. McElrath, M.Ed., Excite Marketing & Public Relations;
Tel: 804.901.2494; pmcelrath@exciteteam.com

Virginia Decorated Navy Officer and New Commanding Officer Cathy Harrison Honored at Legislative Reception

Virginia Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists' President is First and Only CRNA To Hold Such Imposing Position

RICHMOND, VA, January 25, 2012—Richmond resident Captain Cathy A. Harrison, NC, USN, was honored today at the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists' (VANA) legislative breakfast as the first and only Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) in the Navy Reserves to serve as the commanding officer of an operational health support unit. The breakfast reception is part of National Nurse Anesthetists Week, where over 1200 nurse anesthetists in Virginia join 44,000 nurse anesthetists across the country in celebrating *Caring For America* for almost 150 years. Harrison, who is president of VANA, is a respected Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) licensed in Virginia, a decorated Navy Officer with the United States Navy (Reserve Component), educator and entrepreneur, was recognized for her outstanding meritorious service to the United States and her commitment and leadership in furthering the delivery of quality healthcare in Virginia. State Senator John C. Watkins, R-10th District, who is sponsoring Joint Senate Resolution 36 to commend Harrison, and the Secretary of Veteran Affairs and Homeland Security Terrie L. Suit, were on hand for the ceremony which took place in the General Assembly Building.

"As a respected and decorated member of the Navy Reserves for 21 years and the first and only CRNA to serve as a commanding officer of an operational health support unit, Captain Harrison proudly represents the Commonwealth of Virginia and all of our military men and women in service to our country," Watkins said. "I am proud to introduce the commending resolution to recognize her commitment and outstanding service to the military and her leadership in healthcare."

In recognition of her service and accomplishments, Secretary Suit presented Captain Harrison with a Certificate of Recognition from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Suit said that she and Governor McDonnell were so proud of what Harrison had been able to accomplish.

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“Captain Harrison’s great accomplishments have brought well deserved recognition from the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists,” said Secretary Suit. “She has been a dedicated public servant as a Navy Reservist and well respected President of VANA.”

The breakfast reception included members of the Virginia General Assembly, healthcare leaders, and VANA members.

“I proudly receive this recognition from the Commonwealth on behalf of my fellow military colleagues and CRNAs in Virginia, across the country and at military facilities throughout the world that are saving lives each and every day,” said Harrison. “I accept this recognition as a symbol of my abiding faith in the strength of our military and healthcare system, which are the best in the world.”

As Commanding Officer of the Operational Health Support Unit (Bethesda, MD), Captain Harrison oversees the more than 600 military physicians, dentists, nurses and medical service corps officers and corpsmen who provide healthcare to wounded military personnel, active duty and reserve component military members and their dependents, as well as retirees in a joint military command.

About the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists (VANA)

Founded in 1934, the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists (VANA) represents over 1200 Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists and student registered nurse anesthetists who administer 1.2 million anesthetics annually in collaboration with surgeons, anesthesiologists, dentists, podiatrists, and other qualified health professionals. VANA advocates for its patients and members in legislative and governmental affairs and serves as a resource for CRNAs, the nursing and medical professions, hospitals, health care facilities and others interested in anesthesia care. For more information, please visit www.vana.org.

About the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA)

Founded in 1931 and located in Park Ridge, Ill., the AANA is the professional organization for more than 90 percent of the nation’s CRNAs. To learn more about National Nurse Anesthetists Week or the AANA, visit www.aana.com.

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