

2024

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AWARDS



Marguerite Rodgers Kinney Award for a Distinguished Career Connie Barden

Connie Barden, MSN, RN, CCRN, FAAN, is a trailblazer and leading advocate for patients and nurses. Most recently, she served as AACN's first chief clinical officer (CCO). In this role, she exemplified clinical and patient care excellence as she

guided the association through significant events such as the Ebola and COVID-19 outbreaks, and worked with The Joint Commission to alter drip titration standards. She defined the new CCO position and stamped it with her own brand of bold, strategic leadership.

"Bold" is a word frequently associated with Barden. As president of the AACN board of directors from 2002 to 2003, her presidential theme was "Bold Voices - Fearless and Essential." She was a bold voice for the creation of healthy work environments and served as executive editor of "AACN Standards for Establishing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments: A Journey to Excellence" in 2005 and 2016.

In clinical practice, her passion was cardiovascular care and optimal patient outcomes. Barden joined these qualities with her love of innovation to become the first CNS in a tele-ICU in 2009. She later co-led the task force that developed AACN's first "AACN Tele-ICU Nursing Practice Guidelines."

She extended her boldness beyond nursing and co-founded the YES Institute in Miami in 1995. The still-thriving nonprofit's mission is to open conversations on gender, orientation and youth suicide prevention.

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