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### **Nurse Practitioners and Advocates Honored During National AANP Conference**

Nancy V. Atkins, Commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Bureau for Medical Services, was awarded the prestigious AANP State Award for Excellence by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) during its 2013 National Conference in June.

Commissioner Atkins is a Nurse Practitioner who has more than 40 years of experience as an educator and health policy analyst. She is the former chair and is currently serving on the board of the National Association of State Medicaid Directors. She is an instructor at the West Virginia University School of Nursing and has served on the faculties of the West Virginia University School of Medicine and the Marshall University School of Nursing. She has held leadership positions in the West Virginia Nurses Association and served for many years as a delegate to the American Nurses Association.

Commissioner Atkins earned a Master of Science in Nursing at Bellarmine University in Kentucky, and a Bachelor of Science in Health Care Administration at St. Joseph's College in Maine. She received her education and training as a Nurse Practitioner at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. She became Board-Certified as a Nurse Practitioner in 1980.

The State Award for Nurse Practitioner Excellence, founded in 1991, recognizes a Nurse Practitioner in a state who demonstrates excellence in practice. In 1993, the State Award for Nurse Practitioner Advocate was added to recognize the efforts of individuals who have made a significant contribution toward increasing the awareness and acceptance of Nurse Practitioners.

The American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) represents the interests of approximately 157,000 Nurse Practitioners across the country, providing a unified networking platform and advocating for their role as providers of high-quality, cost-effective, comprehensive, patient-centered and personalized health care.

The organization provides legislative leadership at the local, state and national levels, advancing health policy; promoting excellence in practice, education and research; and establishing standards that best serve Nurse Practice patients and other health care consumers.

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