

The annual AAOHN conference is an outstanding opportunity for learning and networking with peers. The 2016 conference theme “Leading the Future: Endless Possibilities in Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing,” provided many opportunities to learn best practices in my new sector of occupational health nursing. I am sincerely grateful for the scholarship that I received.

After 18 years of practicing as an occupational health nurse in the hospital environment, I changed my career path direction and began a new role as occupational health nurse in manufacturing. This change has significantly impacted my professional development goals and competency level. I have gone from being the subject matter expert back to a novice. Thankfully, much of what I have learned in healthcare can be applied in manufacturing. For example, occupational noise and respiratory protection concepts and standards remain the same. There are, however, many new hazards to learn about. Powered industrial trucks and man-lifts were not something causing injuries in the hospital setting. My current professional development goals include becoming competent in the hazards and regulations that impact and guide occupational health practice in the manufacturing setting. I feel that in order to positively impact the health and safety of the workers, I need to fully understand the hazards they face while at work.

Sessions I attended at the annual AAOHN conference have helped me to move forward in achieving my development goals. Sessions such as; *“Exercise in Communication and Hearing Operations (ECHO) Training: Transporting the Hearing Conservationist into the Fight “* and *“The Personal Protective Equipment Fashion Show”* provided opportunities to learn about risks and hazards in manufacturing.

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