

Over twenty-five years (1988) ago a small group of forward thinking nurses working in the field of genetics founded the Genetic Nurse Network. This organization has evolved into The International Society of Nurses in Genetics (ISONG) for nurses and healthcare professionals interested in genetics and genomics.

ISONG is a global specialty organization dedicated to fostering the scientific discovery and professional growth in human genetics and genomics. The conference provides an educational forum for nurses and other healthcare professionals dedicated to all aspects of human genetics and genomics including basic science and clinical research, clinical practice and education for professionals and the public.

### **ISONG past presidents and founders**

Elizabeth Thomson 1989 and 1990

Anne Matthews 1991

Lynette Wright 1992

Dale Halsey Lea 1993

Cynthia Prows 1994

Becky Althaus 1995

Shirley Jones 1996

Janet Williams 1997

Carolyn Farrell 1998

Deborah MacDonald 1999

Maricela Aguilar 2000

Catherine Bove 2001

Debra Schutte 2002

Lindsay Middleton 2003

Judith Lewis 2004

Kathleen Calzone 2005

Heather Skirton 2006

Ann Cashion 2007

Sue Tinley 2008

Agatha Gallo 2009

Karen Greco 2010

Kathleen Sparbel 2011

Ellen Giarelli 2012

Kathleen Hickey 2013

Maggie Kirk 2014

## ISONG Board of Directors and Committees

The current board list is on the website. The Committee chairs and the Committee Descriptions are also on the website.

Currently ISONG has about 350 members. ISONG members include genetic nurses and counselors from around the world, representing 18 countries. Networking and learning about research, education and best clinical practices worldwide is important strategy for many schools of nursing and ISONG aids strategic planning and focus in this arena. Members include students, genetically trained nurses and nurse practitioners, educators and policy makers. They come from a variety of settings, ranging from government agencies to clinical and academics settings.

## Volunteers /Headquarters

ISONG mainly works on an incredible pool of volunteers – these are people who work in academia or clinic (or both) and other agencies such as genetic institutions or government agencies. Each year there are elected persons to the board who do a great deal of work. In addition there are a number of persons who volunteer to chair a committee or work on the committee to provide guidance and services to the organization and the members.

Particularly this year there are a large number of educational webinars with CE's These require a great deal of time, securing speakers, submitting the presentation and documents needed for the CE application, creating the flyers, registering and coordinating attendees and the final survey which is the catalyst for the CE's awarded. Also, this year ISONG embarked on a research initiative asking members to donate toward a grant funded by ISONG and reaching out to universities for support.

There are employees at the headquarters in Pittsburgh. There is an Executive Director and 2 others who work with the group regularly –

membership services, committee liaison, congress planning, webinars, and financials. The office is open from 8-5 daily M-F.

## Member Benefits

ISONG offers members opportunities for education, leadership, exchange and socialization. Members receive the latest reference on genetics delivered via e communications, Forum discussions, Job Opportunities, membership directory, program information and a discounted registration fee for the annual ISONG meeting and educational webinars.

The ISONG annual meeting and webinars offer continuing education credits. Also, ISONG members are eligible to apply for the annual research grant awards. In 2014 there were 5 research awards, an emerging scholar award and other noted member awards. (Noted on the website as well.)

Please contact Linda Mason at [linda@isong.org](mailto:linda@isong.org) for more information.