

Dr. Audria Denker selected for induction into the American Academy of Nursing 2026 Class of Fellows

Louisville leader recognized for her transformative leadership in nursing education and workforce expansion

LOUISVILLE, KY, UNITED STATES, June 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Galen College of Nursing is pleased to announce that Audria Denker, DNP, RN, FAADN, ANEF, Chief Clinical, Integration, and Experience Officer has been selected for induction into the American Academy of Nursing's 2026 Class of Fellows.



The Academy's newest Fellows represent leaders whose clinical expertise, scientific knowledge, and professional influence are advancing health and well-being. The newest Fellows, include nurse leaders from 39 states and 17 countries, and will be honored at the Academy's annual Health Policy Conference this October in Washington, DC.

"Being selected as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing is one of the greatest honors of my career," said Dr. Denker. "As a first-generation college student, former high school dropout, nurse, educator, and leader, this recognition is both humbling and deeply meaningful. It serves as a reminder that our journeys are shaped not only by our own determination, but also by the people who believe in us along the way. I am especially grateful to Kathy Mershon and Tracy Ortelli for their sponsorship and support."

Since Dr. Denker joined Galen College of Nursing in 2005, the college has grown from a regional institution into a national education enterprise spanning 25 campuses across 13 states, serving more than 20,000 students.

"Audria's recognition as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing is a well-deserved acknowledgment of the leadership, vision, and impact she has brought to Galen and to nursing education nationally," said Tracy Ortelli, PhD, RN, CNE, ANEF, FAAN, President and Chief

Academic Officer of Galen College of Nursing. "Her work has helped shape academic practice, strengthen the connection between education and workforce needs, and expand opportunities for students and nurses across the country. I am proud to celebrate this milestone with her."

That sentiment was echoed by Galen's Chief Executive Officer, Mark Vogt.

"This honor reflects not only Audria's personal accomplishments, but also the caliber of leadership that continues to advance Galen's mission," said Vogt. "Her commitment to nursing education, clinical partnership, and student success has had a lasting impact on our college and on the communities we serve."

In addition to her executive leadership, Dr. Denker is active in civic and professional service. She currently serves as president of the Kentucky Board of Nursing and has contributed nationally through roles with Organization for Associate Degree Nursing, the National Council of State Boards She currently serves as president of the Kentucky Board of Nursing and has contributed nationally through roles with Organization for Associate Degree Nursing, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, and the National League for Nursing. She is also a Fellow of both the Academy of Associate Degree Nursing (FAADN) and the Academy of Nursing Education (ANEF).

Dr. Denker earned her Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) from Pikeville College and her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) from Bellarmine University.

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