

# Innovation and Invention

Being a transplant to the Golden State of California for the past 31 years, I have had the privilege to live in arguably one of the most vibrant and innovative states in our union, with energy and diversity visible in our geography, our almost 40 million residents from multiple ethnicities and belief systems, and the sixth largest economy in the world (Legislative Analyst's Office, 2016; World Population Review, 2019). Therefore, this April, southern California's invigorating atmosphere will be the perfect climate to spark and nourish ideas that affect our practice when the 44th annual Oncology Nursing Society Congress takes place in Anaheim.

According to William C. Woods, III (Trey), MSN, NP-C, the chair of the ONS Congress Planning Team, this year's conference once again offers a creative, energized atmosphere for novice and expert clinicians, administrators, and researchers. In addition, the banquet of Congress offerings has been broadened this year based on input gathered from the ONS Communities and oncology nursing thought leaders. There will be plenty of opportunities to learn about areas disparate from one's familiar practice focus.

"I encourage attendees to get out of their comfort zone; they are not obligated to stay in their respective specialty track. Check out what is going on in other tracks," said Woods.

In addition to the full plate of presentations, a cutting-edge keynote will be presented by Rachel Walker, PhD, RN, with a focus on nurse inventors and nursing inventions. Walker is an oncology nurse and an assistant professor in the College of Nursing at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, associate director of the Institute for Applied Life Sciences Center for Personalized Health

Monitoring, and the first nurse to be named an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)-Lemelson Invention Ambassador.

In her keynote, Walker will raise our awareness about the long, proud history and diversity of nurse inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs. She will show how the nursing process intrinsically equips nurses with innovation superpowers.

"As any nurse who's ever worked an eight-hour shift knows, hacking challenges and finding creative solutions is just part

health systems and industry accountable to those voices. Because no one is coming after us to do this work. The opportunity to innovate for health equity is here. The work is ours and the time is now."

To live stream selected Congress sessions, including the keynote, go to <https://congress.ons.org/about/live-streaming>.

Later in 2019, selected Congress presentations, including the keynote and posters, will be accessible via the ONS website. Visit <https://congress.ons.org/archivedsessions> for updates about their

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of the job," Walker said. "We're natural innovators. It's hard to find a nurse who hasn't put out at least three fires before the first cup of coffee, and that's on a good day. Every nurse has the innate capacity for invention."

Walker's keynote will expand on what is happening now and what is on the horizon, including artificial intelligence, blockchain, wearables, the Internet of things, and all the -omic and precision health-type information. But, most importantly, Walker will urge nurses to get involved.

"We must also be activists in our choices about what types of challenges we identify and seek to solve through invention, who gets invited to the table to work on those issues, and how we ensure that what might look like a solution for one person does not inadvertently harm others. Our good intentions are not enough. We must listen to and amplify those voices. We must hold ourselves, our collaborators, and

availability. Also, later this year, Walker will be featured on the Oncology Nursing Podcast from ONS, available for free on iTunes and the Google Play store. Be sure to check it out.



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## KEYWORDS

Congress; nurse education; evidence-based practice

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