“It would be great to see nurses lead the health care industry in cost efficient quality care.”

Philip Fikes
Starting your own business... how many nurses out there have considered it? A little over two and half years ago, a colleague and I took the plunge and Capstone Anesthesia Services (CAS), LLC became a reality.

CAS is a group of advanced practice nurses (CRNAs) that provide anesthesia services for North River Surgical Center in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Our company is owned and operated by Wayne Hoffman, CRNA who serves as president and me — Philip B. Fikes, CRNA, MNA and company vice president.

In case you are wondering how we came up with the name for our group, let me explain. In Merriam Webster’s Dictionary, capstone is defined as a crowning achievement. CCN alums like me, take pride in graduating from the Capstone College of Nursing. And at CAS, we believe that it is truly a “crowning achievement” for us as advanced practice nurses to practice at our full potential while meeting an anesthesia need in our own community.

One of the key elements of forming a successful group is to recruit the best CRNAs. We did just that. I have the pleasure of working with some of the smartest, most caring, and vigilant CRNAs in the healthcare industry including a number of CCN grads. Combined, our years of experience surpass 100 in anesthesia practice. We provide quality care to thousands of people each year.

Our practice has several firsts under its belt. We are the first Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) group in Tuscaloosa. We are also the first anesthesia group to implement an Electronic Health Record (EHR) in West Alabama. EHR’s help clinicians improve safety, quality, and efficiency of care through ease of access to the patient’s health care information. Immediate access to health information is critical in making decisions that impact patient care. EHR’s also provide electronic reporting of data on quality of care.

Using EHR not only benefits patient care, it is a financially sound business practice which allows for more seamless service charge reimbursement from insurers and governmental agencies. We are proud to lead West Alabama into the future in this realm.

For all future nurses, I would recommend including business courses in your curriculum. If you plan to start a business or be a nursing manager, this is especially important. The health care industry is requiring nurses to be business savvy. It would be great to see nurses lead the health care industry in cost efficient quality care.