



Who is a key person who supported you in becoming a gerontological nurse educator?

The key person who supported me the most was my mentor at UAH, Dr. Rita Ferguson. She encouraged me in developing our BSN gerontological nursing course. Our dean, Dr. Marsha Adams, also supported me (and Dr. Ferguson) in applying for the UAB Geriatrics Education Faculty Scholar program, for which we were accepted in 2015!

What motivated you to become a gerontological nurse educator?

For the majority of my nursing career, I cared for older adults in the home health setting and came to realize that they are such a wonderful population to work with and care for! When I became an educator, it was just a logical step that I would become a gerontological nurse educator to ensure that this growing population had nurses to continue to provide quality care.

Favorite experience as a gerontological nurse expert educator

My favorite experience is watching the traditional BSN students' perceptions change toward older adults during our course. Most of our students desire to practice in OB, pediatrics, or the critical care areas, but it's amazing to see the change in their attitudes and feelings toward older adults after spending time in clinical with them! And the older adults LOVE having the students care for them – they love that extra attention, especially in the long term care setting!

Where would you like to see gerontological nursing education to be at in 5 years

I would like to see all colleges and schools of nursing have gerontological nursing courses at the undergraduate and graduate level as well as either a gerontological nursing program or certificate because this is such an important need globally.

Key words of wisdom for those nurses interested in becoming a distinguished educator in gerontological nursing education?

Do it! It signifies, to me at least, that I have the expertise in providing the appropriate knowledge to our future nurses who will be caring for our gerontological population! It is an honor and privilege to be a distinguished educator in gerontological nursing education!



Lenora Smith
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About Lenora

Education

- PhD, Medical University of South Carolina
- MSN/FNP (subspecialty in palliative care), University of Alabama Birmingham
- MSN, University of Phoenix
- BSN, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
- ADN, Davidson County Community College

Clinical Expertise

- Gerontology
- Home health
- Case management
- Medical/surgical

Research Interests

- Gerontology
- Dementia-related research/Non-pharmacological technological interventions in dementia
- End of life/palliative care