



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

I would like to see a mentorship program for training interdisciplinary sciences and brought together with the contributions of individuals, institutions and students engaged in practical interventions and delivering health services for improving the health of underserved older adults. I also would like to see the development and provision for culturally appropriate evidence-based interventions, which focus on a tailored personal approach, behavioral change, self-management interventions and eliminating health disparities.

### Favorite experience as a gerontological nurse expert educator?

One of my favorite experiences was soon after I entered the US. I was working as nursing faculty and on the weekends, I worked at a major hospital. The hospital experience was a wonderful opportunity to gain perspective on practices here in the US and the application of them to my teaching. Since I had recently worked in hospitals and taught in Thailand, I was also able to compare these experiences in the hospitals and teaching, develop perspective and learn from a broad array of opportunities from opposite sides of the globe.

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

I am a first generation college graduate and had to deal with several challenges but I overcame these hardships and succeeded. My mother had dreamed of becoming a teacher but she was only able to go the school until the 4th grade. My mother, who believes in the power of education, supported me the best she could and sympathized with my struggles. She is my role model: an optimistic and a hard-working woman. She motivates me not to give up, believes in people and is always respectful to others.

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

The practice of dedicated and consistent stretching of professional knowledge is the most important accomplishment of my personal development.



**Ladda Thiamwong**  
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### What motivated you to become a gerontological nurse educator?

My historical disadvantaged background keeps me rooted in a personality of strong work ethic, frugality, and diligence. For almost 15 years, I have been working with low income and illiterate people in rural communities to meet their health needs. Working with limited healthcare resources and fragmented services, required several strategies and perseverance. Given these circumstances, I feel that these experiences, while obviously challenging, have provided me with valuable opportunities for growth and insight into the plight of other socio-economically disadvantaged individuals in the healthcare system. I want students to know they can make a difference in the lives of others in need.

### About Ladda

An aging expert with 15 years of experience in gerontological nursing education, Thiamwong has spent most of her career and research on healthy aging, fall prevention in older adults and aging education. Her research has been published and presented both nationally and internationally. At the University of Central Florida, College of Nursing, Thiamwong is the lead developer of a physio-feedback exercise education program that seeks to improve balance performance and reduce the fear of falling in ethnically diverse older adults. Additionally, Thiamwong is part of a team using simulation technology with nursing undergraduate students to enhance students' empathy toward older adults. Currently, she is co-investigator on a \$1.5 million funded study from the National Institute on Aging studying the adaptation of brain and body responses to perturbations during gait in young and older adults.

In her native Thailand, Thiamwong developed a healthy aging model and fall risk assessment test for community-dwelling older adults. Additionally, she was the founding chair of a multidisciplinary research group focused on rural older adult health and a co-investigator on several projects funded by the National Research Council of Thailand.

Actively engaged in the gerontological nursing education community, Thiamwong is a member of the Gerontological Society of America, a reviewer for 11 peer-reviewed professional journals and has served as a reviewer for the World Congress of the International Association of Gerontology