



What motivated you to become a gerontological nurse educator?

From an early age, I was known as a helper and had a penchant for working with older adults. I enjoyed their wisdom and storytelling. My first job as a nurse educator was working with students and older adults in a nursing home.

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

I would like to see gerontological nursing education in 2024 as a required part of baccalaureate nursing education for all students, with national certification available at the master's degree and above levels.

Favorite experience as a gerontological nurse expert educator?

My favorite experience as a gerontological nurse expert educator is the education and development of future nurse leaders in gerontology. My time as Executive Director of the National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence is a career highlight, and I treasure my association with the almost 300 Scholars and Fellows that successfully completed the program.

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

Along my career trajectory, I have been the beneficiary of many words of wisdom, but on this day I find myself reflecting on words found in the Foreword of Benner, et.al., *Educating Nurses: A Call for Radical Transformations* (2010) by Lee S. Shulman: "As a nurse, I am the patient's last line of defense." As nurses, we are all educators. To future NHCGNE Distinguished Nurse Educators, I wish you success as you fully enact the role of advocate for patients, families and our profession.

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



J Taylor Harden
PhD, RN, FGSA, FAAN
Director Emeritus, NHCGNE

Dr. Mary Starke Harper (1919-2006) is an American Academy of Nursing Legend and was an authority on mental health and aging/gero-psychiatric nursing. She was a key person in supporting my development as a doctorally-prepared educator and scientist. In 1972, Dr. Harper created the National Institute of Mental Health's Minority Fellowship Program. This fellowship program supported my doctoral education as well as the education of over 12,000 doctors, scientists, nurses, psychologists, social workers and other health professionals.

About J Taylor

J Taylor Harden is Director Emeritus and former executive director of the National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence, an international non-profit association. Dr. Harden has served as the assistant to the director of the National Institute on Aging in the Office of Special Populations. She was responsible for activities supporting women, racially and ethnically diverse populations and people with disabilities. She has wide-ranging research and administrative expertise in aging research with emphases in clinical interventions, risk and resilience in older women, minority health and health disparities, and mentoring future generations of gerontologists.

Dr. Harden has received many honors, including the NIH Director's Award, the New York University College of Nursing Helen Manzer Award, and the Gerontological Society of America's (GSA) Task Force on Minority Issues in Gerontology Outstanding Mentorship Award. She is a Fellow of the GSA, New York Academy of Medicine and American Academy of Nursing.

Dr. Harden received both bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from the University of Maryland at Baltimore. She earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Psychiatric Mental-Health Nursing (Psycho-gerontology) from the University of Texas at Austin and is a distinguished alumna of the School of Nursing.