



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

I envision with the growing number of older adults globally that more attention will be paid to the fact that aging is a specialty and requires appropriate education & experience to provide the highest level of accurate, safe care to older adults. I would really hope that gerontology does not remain the “stepchild” of our health care educational system; not all nurses are prepared to care for older adults. There is in-depth knowledge & all types of experiences that students should be having in their educational process in order to be competent in especially care of frail, vulnerable older adults of all cultural groups.

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

Inspiring interprofessional health care students at all levels to see aging in a more positive light, even if they don't pursue gerontology/geriatrics. It has been a true blessing to have students embrace caring for older adults because of something they learned from me in the classroom or in my clinical practice.

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

With human beings living longer, a career in gerontology definitely has job security but also is filled with satisfaction & meaning – both professionally & personally. Being invited in to care for an older adult allows me the opportunity to learn from them, to discover their values/dreams & help them live the best life they can every day until their last breath. It also affords me the opportunity to provide realistic hope & support their unique individuality – providing dignity & respect to the end. There is not a better privilege or blessing than that experience!

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

I would say my extended family of older adults who supported & encouraged me during my lifetime to see the world in a more holistic & sacred manner.

### What motivated you to become a gerontological nurse educator?

I was blessed to have both sets of grandparents & 3 sets of great grandparents growing up. Additionally, all the “grands” were from very large farming families so I had lots of great aunts & uncles. Although most lived out of the state I grew up in, we visited them frequently in the summer & it was always a time of fun & joy. I admired their wisdom & the stories they told – which were so very different from a “city kids” perspective & experience. We also



**Linda J. Keilman**  
DNP, GNP-BC, FAANP  
Michigan State University

attended all of the funerals over the years which were a celebration of their lives; I learned that death is part of life, not something to be feared or not spoken about. It was from my love & respect for my older relatives as unique individuals with incredible experiences (my phrase = “living history books”) that I decided on gerontology! I learned so much from their living & their dying!

### About Linda

Dr. Keilman has been a nationally certified Gerontological Nurse Practitioner (GNP) since 1989 and was inducted as a Fellow into the American Association of Nurse Practitioners in June 2017. Dr. Keilman has been teaching nursing since 1983 in a variety of academic settings. She has taught in the College of Nursing at Michigan State University (MSU) since 1992 where she is an Associate Professor and Director of the Adult/Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program. Before entering the nursing profession, Dr. Keilman was an elementary school teacher with degrees in education (Concordia University Ann Arbor, MI; Concordia University River Forest, IL). After teaching elementary school, Dr. Keilman felt pursuing a nursing education was her calling. She has nursing degrees from Lansing Community College (AD), Michigan State University (MSN), and Oakland University (DNP).

Dr. Keilman has worked as a nurse practitioner in a variety of settings since 1989. Her clinical experience as a GNP has been in: Geriatric Assessment Center, Internal Medicine, a nurse-managed clinic for low-income senior housing, home care, Hospice/palliative care, continence center, senior health, long-term care, subacute rehabilitation, a continuing care retirement community, and parish nursing. Her current practice is providing primary, acute, and end-of-life care for residents in long-term care.

Dr. Keilman has been involved in interprofessional education and research for many years. She was lead curriculum specialist with the Geriatric Education Center of Michigan from 1998 through 2015, educating health care professionals in the state of Michigan on how to care for older adults holistically and appropriately. Dr. Keilman and colleagues from the College of Communication Arts & Sciences at MSU received funding from the Michigan Humanities Council for their video-documentary, *The Living History Project: Stories Told by Michigan's Oldest Old*.

Dr. Keilman volunteers on many local, state, and national boards and committees. She is a frequently invited conference, workshop, and organization speaker on a variety of topics but most specifically gerontology.