



Celebration of our Charter Fellows

Ellen Lemberg, MS, RN, WHNP, FAANP

A pioneer in the field of nurse practitioner continuing education, Ellen Lemberg served as the chair for the University of Colorado's National Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Symposium at Keystone Colorado from 1988 until 1999. During this period, Ms. Lemberg was involved with the continuing education of many nurse practitioners and facilitated national discussions related to nurse practitioner issues. The symposium provided a neutral venue where early leaders and representatives of nurse practitioner organizations could exchange ideas and come together in discussions about the emerging role of the nurse practitioner.

Extending from this work, Ms. Lemberg was part of an international group of nurse practitioners developing the first international nurse practitioner network. Although not active with the symposium now, Ms. Lemberg consults with them in the area of educational programming.

After leaving the above position, Ms. Lemberg had continued to work in women's health, as a nurse practitioner and breast cancer prevention research.

This interview took place by phone at her home in Colorado where she lives with her husband, Chuck. They have two adult children who also live in the area.

JSL: Ellen, it is so good to talk with you. We last saw one another in Seneca Falls, New York, when Dr. Loretta Ford was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

EL: That was such a fabulous weekend, seeing Dr Ford honored for truly transforming global health care with development of the nurse practitioner role.

JSL: Ellen, how did you feel when you learned that you were to be inducted into the Charter Fellowship?

EL: I was stunned as I did not see myself as a leader. It was truly an unexpected honor and one of the great accomplishments of my career.

JSL: How do you see the Fellowship as being successful?

EL: I was extremely excited about the idea of a mentoring program. It was so needed at the time as nurse practitioner roles were just emerging and clinicians needed to have more seasoned practitioners for guidance in making their way through a not always friendly health care system. It was a great idea for a larger organization to identify mentoring as a priority.

JSL: The Fellowship has grown rapidly in the past decade. Do you think that it has worked towards its goals of becoming a venue for leadership?

EL: I have not been able to continue my involvement in the Fellowship in the past many years but I do know that the mentoring program has been a huge success and I am sure that the other areas have been successful as well.

JSL: Any thoughts about the new Association, combining the Academy and the College?

EL: I was very pleased. I think it is critical for nurse practitioners to have one voice. The power of the new organization can do nothing but help nurse practitioners gain political and lobbying power.

JSL: Now that you are retired, what fills your time?

EL: I volunteer in the area of advocacy for mental health care. I enjoy taking advantage of living in Colorado, such a great place to live. My husband and I like to travel. We are planning a trip to Ethiopia this fall, where he was in the Peace Corps.

JSL: Thank you Ellen for your time today. It was great to catch up on the early days of this most important symposium.
