

## Leanne Busby

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### **Dr. Leanne Busby 1945-2022**

Leanne was born in Nashville TN and began her nursing career as a nurse's aide. She moved up the career ladder from LPN to PhD. After her career at Vanderbilt University, she became Dean of the Jeanette Rudy School of Nursing at Cumberland University. She was one of the early nurse practitioners and nurse educators and founded a school based clinics. As one of the early nurse practitioners she was innovative and forward thinking. She assumed leadership roles and was in the first cohort of Fellows of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. She was recognized for excellence in practice, teaching and policy.

### **Interview Abstract**

This was one of the first interviews of Charter Fellows in 2010. Members were asked to reflect upon how they felt when they were inducted in 2000. In the interview, Leanne discusses what it meant to be a fellow. She was in fact honored for her achievements but remained humble. The fellowship offered her a sense of credibility for her leadership. She says that being with colleagues helped her to develop a more complete philosophy of nursing and enhanced her critical thinking skills. The Fellowship was the recognition of the many roles of the nurse practitioner combining practice, research, teaching, and policy. She recognized mentorship as an important part of the role. Her advice to new nurse practitioners was to seek a mentor and work hard to continue to change the healthcare system. She encouraged all nurse practitioners to join national organizations to increase NP impact.

### **Biographical Sketch**

Born in Nashville, Leanne went from a nurse's aide to a PhD. As faculty she developed a nurse managed clinic at Vanderbilt University. Later she became Dean of The Jeanette Rudy School of Nursing at Cumberland University and was on the TN Board of Regents.

Leanne married after high school and began her career in nursing by being a nurse's aide at Cookeville General Hospital. She later attended LPN school in Tullahoma at *the* Coffey Count Hospital and received her AS degree from MTSU.

She received a BSN from Western Kentucky University, MSN from Vanderbilt University and Doctorate from the University of Alabama, Birmingham.

She was the Director of the Tennessee Regents Online Collaborative, MSN and HIT programs, from 2007 when she was invited to this position by the Tennessee Board of Regents., she served as Professor of Nursing at Vanderbilt University from 2007-2009 and as Professor and Dean at the Jeanette Rudy School of Nursing at Cumberland University from 2000-2007. Her Faculty Development Grant for the Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (1995-1997), her 20-year tenure on the Tennessee Board of Directors, Nursing's Alternative Dispute Resolution Panel, and her two-year internship at the Betty Ford Clinic as nurse-in-residence, establish her as one the leading experts in drug and alcohol abuse and treatment. In the 1980s she received a W.K. Kellogg Grant to develop primary care and school-based clinics for disadvantaged populations. She was a test writer for AANP and served as Secretary of the Certification Commission.

Leanne met her husband in kindergarten and began a life-long journey with her husband of 58 years. In retirement she enjoyed time with her children and grandchildren.

**Keywords**

Advanced practice nurse, nurse practitioners, AANP fellow, school based clinics

**Interview Transcript**

**Leanne Busby**

**AANP Oral History Project**

## Leanne Busby



**Dr. Leanne Busby** has been working full-time as the Director of the Tennessee Regents Online Collaborative, MSN and HIT programs, since 2007 when she was invited to this position by the Tennessee Board of Regents. Prior to this appointment, she served as Professor of Nursing at Vanderbilt University from 2007-2009 and as Professor and Dean at the Jeanette Rudy School of Nursing at Cumberland University from 2000-2007. Her Faculty Development Grant for the Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (1995-1997), her 20 year tenure on the Tennessee Board of Directors, Nursing's Alternative Dispute Resolution Panel, and her two year internship at the Betty Ford Clinic as nurse-in-residence, establish her as one of the leading experts in drug and alcohol abuse and treatment. In the 1980s she received a W.K. Kellogg Grant to develop primary care and school-based clinics for disadvantaged populations. She was a test writer for AANP and served as Secretary of the Certification Commission.

The following interview took place by phone on May 6, 2010 from her home in Nashville TN where she resides with her husband, Michael. He is a Professor at TN State University and Director of the Center of Excellence in Engineering Systems and Technology. They have been married since 1963 having met when they were in kindergarten.

**JSL:** How did you react when you were notified of selection into the charter class of the AANP Fellowship?

**LB:** I was both surprised and honored to be included with many of my role models. I heard about the formation from colleagues but never expected that I could meet the criteria. I felt that it gave me credibility with my colleagues and students and was a reward for all the hard work of preparation I had done in the past. I was able to join colleagues that I held in high esteem and could recognize myself as a role model.

**JSL:** What do you think the Fellowship has done for nurse practitioners?

**LB:** I believe that the Fellowship demonstrated to the entire nursing community that the nurse practitioner role was essential to health care in America. It became a merger of practice, education, and research and was a huge factor in confirming the skills of nurse practitioners as leader in all areas. It helped to expand the role into various clinical and educational settings and increased mutual respect with physician colleagues.

**JSL:** How did the Fellowship help you to think outside the box?

**LB:** The Fellowship has certainly helped me to further formulate my philosophy of nursing and to increase my critical thinking skills. I have watched many of my students publish in peer-reviewed journals and feel that there is greater support for new graduates from the mentoring arm of FAANP. This has led former students to assume leadership roles across the nation.

**JSL:** Do you have any advice for new Fellows?

**LB:** Seek a mentor and work hard for change. In Tennessee, being a southern state, it is often difficult to make change. But, when I look back, we have been able to literally transform the health system in the past 30 years.

JSL: You continue to work and keep active with many professional activities. How do you find time for a personal life?

LB: I love to read, shop, and go antiquing. My seven grandchildren keep every moment busy and a joy. I had open heart surgery in 2006 and an angioplasty/stent placement in 2007 and these events brought me back to the importance of listening to myself and practicing better self-care. They also reminded me of the value of bedside nursing. As a patient, I saw firsthand how nursing has evolved and how vital it is to healing and recovery. Finally, I want to stress to all women, that we do present our cardiac problems very differently from men. If you feel something is happening, please do not deny symptoms but get help immediately.

JSL: I'm happy that you have made a complete recovery, Leanne. Thank you for spending this time with me.