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# Cheryl Hoying interview for the Miami Valley College of Nursing and Health Oral History Project

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CHERYL HOYING  
JUNE 3, 2010

RECORDING BEGINS

DONNA MILES CURRY: Okay, this is the recording of our interview with Dr. Cheryl Hoying for the College of Nursing and Health, Wright State University, Miami Valley Oral History Project. Cheryl was this year's 2010 recipient of the Outstanding Alumni Award and we would like to take this opportunity to get to know more about you and especially your experiences here at Wright State. So, Cheryl would you like to just start off and just give us a short background on your professional experience and where you are at right now?

CHERYL HOYING: Sure. I originally started in health care back in high school. I went to a vocational high school where you in your junior and senior year worked two weeks and then went to school two weeks throughout the year. At that time I worked at St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Dayton, Ohio starting out as a Nursing Assistant. So, I started in the hospital when I was sixteen and I've kept on that trajectory ever since.

DMC: Very good.

CH: I held numerous positions starting out as Nursing Assistant and eventually went to Senior Vice President level.

DMC: Very good. So, tell us how you came to Wright State as a student?

CH: I came to Wright State right after high school and it was in 1974. At the time a lot of the diploma programs in the city were contemplating on going through the baccalaureate degree. And at that time I kind of saw the hand writing on the wall and thought if I was going to go back to school I was going to go back to get my bachelors. And so that led me to Wright State.

DMC: Very good. So, you really didn't look at any other nursing programs at all?

CH: No, I didn't. I stayed in the community. Financially it wasn't an option to go out of the state for school and I was familiar with Wright State's programs from already working in the hospital. And so I went ahead and decided that's where I wanted to go.

DMC: Excellent. So what was your first impression when you were on campus? What are your memories? What did it look like to you?

CH: Well you know it's funny, at the time my father was in construction and so I remember pulling into the campus and there he was putting up one of the buildings.

DMC: Oh, how neat.

CH: Yeah, it was back at a time when there were very few buildings on campus and it was a time of great growth. I remember looking up and seeing him as an iron worker putting up the steel for the building.

DMC: Wow. Do you remember which building that was at all?

CH: I'm sorry?

DMC: You don't remember which building that would have been?

CH: No, I don't remember which one it was at the time. At the time I was there all of the classes for nursing were in Allyn Hall.

DMC: Right.

CH: So, we didn't have to venture very far. All of our classes were just mainly right there in the quad area.

DMC: Were the faculty offices over where the Student Union is near the gym?

CH: No, they were in Allyn Hall as well.

DMC: Oh, okay. Very good. Yeah, that's interesting. So, what challenges did you find at all during your student years at Wright State?

CH: Well, you know to me the biggest challenge was trying to find clinicals. And it was before GPS came into vogue and they would say, “Okay, your clinical is at Good Samaritan Hospital” or wherever. And if you are not used to traveling in the city you’d have to leave at least a half hour earlier than when you thought you would just to make sure you knew how to get to x, y, z, part of town and where you are going for the clinicals. I remember that was one of the biggest challenges that I had was just trying to find that nursing home or that hospital where I was supposed to do my clinical rotation at.

DMC: What was your favorite clinical when you were in nursing school?

CH: I would have to say oncology. I loved the oncology patients.

DMC: And do you remember what setting you were in and who your clinical instructor was?

CH: Oh, back at the time?

DMC: Yeah.

CH: No. (Laughs) Not at all.

DMC: They didn’t stick out. That one didn’t stick out for you. What was your favorite class? Do you remember? When you were in the program was Gert your dean?

CH: She was and I remember at the time when I think about the administration and stuff, Gert Torres was the dean and she came to school on a motorcycle. And we thought that was all really cool because you rarely saw female deans out there coming to school on a motorcycle. We just thought she was real cutting edge.

DMC: Very neat. And did you have any personal interaction with her or any of the other administrators in the program?

CH: Yeah, you know everybody was real approachable. They were always very friendly and helpful along the way. Never had a time that I never thought I could approach any of them

and ask for help or assistance. I remember Phyllis Andrews was doing her student, well, I should say it was her professorship as an instructor and she had to have two people in the class that were kind of like her personal students as she got her teaching degree. I know she asked me and another student to do that and you always did it because you know they were always so helpful to you. Anyway that you could help them along the way you did it.

DMC: Oh yeah. Really neat. So, you did your baccalaureate degree. Any traditions you remember at the time when you were in the baccalaureate program?

CH: (Pause)

DMC: At the point when you graduated did you guys have any special celebrations or anything?

CH: You know I remember us going out to the quad whenever we had any break time. And just really sitting outside as much as we could, gathering in the quad area there. There's a little moat area and we were all huddled around there and to talk and compare notes and explain things to each other that one of us understood more than the other along the way. I just remember absorbing all of that and thinking at the time what a great school it was because there were so many people there who had disabilities and it was a great campus for students to get around on who were in wheelchairs or had crutches and things because the campus was geared to accessibility. I remember at the time thinking, Nan Davis was out there and I think Dr. Provosky (I forget his exact name), was doing work where she could walk and pick up her diploma. She actually walked across the stage.

DMC: Yeah, that was amazing.

CH: And she was a paraplegic at the time. I remember sitting outside and trying to absorb all the different people and activities going on.

DMC: Neat. So, I'm asking you to describe if you had interaction with administrators, any other things you remember doing with your fellow students at all? Do you recall anything special around graduation at all?

CH: Um, you know I got married my junior year when I was in college and so a lot of the time I ended up spending time with my husband being a newlywed there along the way so we ended up basically hanging out with other people who were married. And then I also worked part time. I worked two days a week still in the hospital to pay for school and other things. So, I didn't have a whole lot of free time back then.

DMC: So, did you have any opportunity otherwise at that time to interact with other organizations across campus?

CH: Oh yeah. We were always involved if there was some kind of charity event or something going on, we always tried to contribute to that. We would drive together to clinical, those type of things along the way just so we could have that comradely as student nurses.

DMC: Very good. And so, tell us when you graduated from your baccalaureate program, how did you go about deciding where to get a job and tell us about that time period.

CH: Well, I was still working at St. Elizabeth and had worked there then probably six years, two years in high school and four years of going through my baccalaureate program. So, for me it was a very comfortable environment to move in to. And so I remember getting two job offers. One was the oncology unit, it was a forty-two bed head and neck unit and the other one was the emergency department where I had worked on the weekends as well as in the ICU. And I remember thinking I really probably need to take the position on the floor so that I could hone in all of my organizational skills before I would move to the ED or any other place as a nurse. So, for me it was an easy transition just going to the head and neck oncology unit and I felt very at home there.

DMC: Well good. Now I know you did your master's degree also at Wright State in Nursing Administration. When did you go from working as a staff nurse and start venturing into administration?

CH: You know it was shortly after that. Probably a year later after doing floor nursing I went into being a Patient Educator in the hospital and then a Nutrition Support Nurse and it just seemed like when new opportunities came up people would tap me on the shoulder and say, "Gosh, would you be interested in doing this?" or "Could you start this out?". So at that time, I think my first job really looking into administration and things was running the inpatient hospice unit that we had at St. Elizabeth and it was a joint venture with Hospice of Dayton. They had never had an inpatient unit before and now look how they've really grown to be one of the greatest hospices around. But at the time it was twelve beds. It was dually run by a member from Hospice of Dayton and myself. And that was my first, I'd say, management experience in an administrative position.

DMC: Did you interact with Betty Schmoel then?

CH: Yeah, Betty Schmoel was there at the time.

DMC: Yeah, another one of our alumni.

CH: Yes, very much, yes, great lady.

DMC: How neat. Very good. And so tell us about your decision to go on for your masters.

CH: Well, after being out for a number of years I just thought that it would be something that I would enjoy doing. I felt like I wanted to progress in my education in nursing. There again I looked at Wright State to go back for my masters and really found the administrative route was what really excited me. And it was great because there was an administrative tract and so many of the different colleges and universities didn't have an administrative tract out there so

for me it was a great program in that I could focus in on more of the things that I had an interest in.

DMC: Great. And did you have a favorite class in the graduate program?

CH: Wow, um, you know Donna Dean was there at the time and I just remember any class that she taught I thoroughly enjoyed. So, I would have to say anything Donna taught.

DMC: Excellent. Yes. Was she your thesis advisor?

CH: My thesis advisor was Sharon or Susan Praeger.

DMC: Oh, excellent.

CH: And Susan was such an inspirational person to me. She was always that ray of hope to say, "Yeah, you're going to get through this thesis. You can do it." And she just always had a very calming effect on me, just going into her office and seeking guidance along the way helped a great deal. I know she just retired this year.

DMC: Yes.

CH: I know she'll be dearly missed.

DMC: Yeah, very much. Do you remember what your thesis was on?

CH: I do. It was looking at job satisfaction of hospital staff nurses.

DMC: Very good.

CH: And in having the baccalaureate degree or associate degree or diploma, did that make a difference in job satisfaction?

DMC: Oh neat. Very cool. Anything during your graduate studies that was a particularly special memory?

CH: From graduate studies? Um, I think one of my favorite memories was the classes were smaller than they were in the baccalaureate level.

DMC: Sure.



CH: And so having that more intimate discussion with maybe ten to fifteen people versus you know forty or fifty that part I found very thought provoking and enjoyed that tremendously. And then honing in on presentations and presentation skills, those type of things are good memories of back then.

DMC: Good. Very good. So, how do you feel your experiences at Wright State had any effect on your career?

CH: Well, they definitely have. I still teach at Wright State, spring quarter. I have been for probably the last seven, eight years focusing on administration and HR.

DMC: Right.

CH: And so I always feel like giving back to my alumni is important. I thoroughly enjoy that. You're always asked questions you never really thought of before.

DMC: (Laughs)

CH: Why are you doing what you are doing so I thoroughly enjoy that. So, I think keeping that hand in the educational realm, to me is very, very important.

DMC: Good.

CH: It's prepared me for the role that I'm in because as Senior VP it's not only inpatient, it's community, it's all the outpatient centers, really just expanding and growing all the time to say, "Yeah, you can do it." And to look at something different and succeed in doing it.

DMC: Do you still remember your nursing theorists?

CH: My nursing theorists! Yes, I do. Yes, probably the one I use the most was Dorothea Orem.

DMC: Oh cool. Very good.

CH: Yes.

DMC: She made a lot of sense.

CH: Yeah, I remember all of those very vividly. Yes.

DMC: (Laughs) I think that's one thing Wright State's curriculum really was very strong on.

CH: Yes, I think so too, Donna.

DMC: Very good. Pam, do you have any particular questions you would like to ask of Dr. Hoying?

PN: Okay. I was just curious, on your CV for your bachelor's you have in parentheses community health and rehabilitation?

CH: Yes.

PN: Did you graduate with a specialty and how did you do that?

CH: Um, well, so much of what Wright State is about when I was there at the time was community health and rehab. And so a lot of our clinicals were all out in the community looking at the populous as a whole and how to make sure that you're looking at populations of people versus individuals as well. And then we visited a lot of the rehabilitation sites in town. In fact St. Elizabeth had one of the best rehab centers around. And we spent a lot of the time in being instrumental in helping people to get back to the best level they could possibly get in after a stroke or an injury or something of that nature. So, it was really in looking at not only inpatient but how do you look at the whole community focus that's out there.

PN: Good. Thank you.

DMC: Is there anything we didn't ask you that you'd like to share with us about your experiences at Wright State?

CH: Well, it was a great program. I know it continues to excel and grow. I think Wright State University as a whole is wonderful. My daughter just graduated last Friday from Med School.

DMC: Excellent.

CH: She was very involved on the Board of Trustees as a student. I just think as a whole it just is a wonderful university and nursing program that allows you to be as much as you want to be and be as involved as you want to be along the way. I would advocate it highly to anybody who wants to continue their education.

DMC: Very good. Okay. I thank you very much. And we will send you a copy of the transcript just in case there is something you wanted to help us with. Okay?

CH: Oh sure, that sounds fine. I'm sorry about the connection. I'm not sure why it kept fading out today.

DMC: It is funny. Isn't that? But regardless, thank you so much.

CH: Thank you both. Appreciate it.

PN: Thank you Cheryl.

DMC: Bye.

CH: Bye, bye. Thanks.

RECORDING ENDS