



Dr. Elizabeth "Lissa" Barker is certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Barker has had a distinguished career. She served 36 years in the United States Navy, which included an assignment as the Commanding Officer of the Naval Hospital Corpus Christi Health Care System. After her time in the military, Dr. Barker became a faculty member at The Ohio State University, where she holds the title of Professor Emeritus of Clinical Nursing at the College of Nursing. With a passion for wellness and global health, she continues to educate and practice clinically. She currently holds a position as Special Instructor at the Mount Carmel College of Nursing and practices in a University Health setting. Dr. Barker is recognized for her extensive experience in primary care and nursing curricula for developing countries. She has received numerous honors, including past chair of the Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Chair of the Mentorship Committee, Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Fellow of the National Academy of Practice, and Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing serving on the Primary Care and Global Health expert panels.

Interview Abstract

Dr. Barker's career has been distinguished. She served for 36 years in the United States Navy and is a Professor Emeritus of Clinical Nursing at the College of Nursing at The Ohio State University. Dr. Barker is certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner and is educated with a Ph.D. She is recognized as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, a Fellow of the American College of Health Care Executives, a Fellow of the National Academy of Practice, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing.

In the interview, Dr. Barker reflected on changes since her induction as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) in 2001. She has seen growth in specialty areas, increased educational opportunities, and the positive influence of Fellows mentoring new and

experienced nurse practitioners. Fellows have significantly influenced the direction of AANP and healthcare in the United States through the years in her observation.

Dr. Barker also considered her own impact on the nurse practitioner movement. She has served in various leadership positions, including Chair of the Fellows Mentor program. In retrospect, she would have promoted more collaboration with leaders outside of the Fellows group to strengthen the role of nurse practitioners overall. Dr. Barker would like to be remembered as someone who made a difference in healthcare by excelling and passing on those skills to others, empowering them to achieve even greater things than she has.

She also has advice to give to Nurse Practitioners in all stages. For new nurse practitioners, she encourages them to continue learning. For a Fellow in the first year of Induction, Dr. Barker would have given herself the advice of engaging in Fellows' activities and gaining confidence to make a difference in advancing practice. Her message for current Fellows is to keep working and continue showing how Fellowship will improve patient outcomes. In the future, Dr. Barker sees nurse practitioners as saving US healthcare through leading health system change.

Biographical Sketch

"Lissa" Barker Ph.D., CNP, FAANP, FACHE, FNAP, FAAN is a Family Nurse Practitioner with over thirty years' experience in active advanced nursing practice. She joined The Ohio State University faculty after retiring from the United States Navy where she concluded a 36-year career. Her last assignment was as the Commanding Officer of Naval Hospital Corpus Christi Health Care System. She is a Professor (Emeritus) of Clinical Nursing at the College of Nursing at The Ohio State University. Dr. Barker is also a Special Instructor at Mount Carmel College of Nursing where she serves on the DNP committee and teaches Nursing 552, Healthcare Environments. "Lissa" is a past chair of the Fellows of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and is currently the Chair of the Mentorship Committee. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and serves on the Primary Care and Global Health expert panels. She is also a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and a Fellow of the National Academy of Practice. She has been practicing with University Health Connections for the past thirteen years. Her passion is wellness and global health. She has extensive experience in primary care and nursing curriculum development in developing countries.

Keywords: Fellow, nurse practitioner, mentor, American Association of Nurse Practitioners

Elizabeth “Lissa” Barker

Interview

AANP Oral History Project



Interview by Kathleen Wilson

KW: *Since being selected in 2001 as a fellow what has changed since then?*

EB: As a member of the 2nd Fellows class, I see that much has changed since then. The depth and expertise across so many specialty areas has grown and has exploded over the years, for instance, the ability of the Fellows to create a positive effect with nurse practitioners establishing roles as mentors. There has been a continued and deep connection with military nurses. Continuing education opportunities have expanded greatly.

KW: *What do you see as the pivotal moments in the past years?*

EB: Fellows have had a great influence on the strategic direction and implementation as a whole on the direction of AANP through times of growth and reorganization. With the election of more Fellows, continuing to keep the bar rising to mirror increasing levels of expertise in improving patient outcomes, we are playing a pivotal role in the reshaping of healthcare in the United States. We have seen the increasing influence in legislation at both the state and national levels, especially with the influence of Dr. Jan Towers and our state and federal legislative office experts.

KW: *How have you been able to impact the nurse practitioner movement?*

EB: I have had the opportunity serve in many different leadership capacities as follows: a military nurse practitioner, a licensed independent colleague, faculty, chair of the Fellows, member of the selection committee, and most recently as the co – chair of the Fellows Mentor Program. The Fellows Mentor Program has had the benefit of providing mentorship to nurse practitioners new to the profession, as well as for seasoned nurse practitioners who are following a new passion. Leaders such as Mary Jo Goolsby and Mary Ellen Roberts have helped to nurture the mentor program.

KW: *Is there anything you would change if you had it to do over again?*

EB: I would have encouraged more collaboration with leaders who were not in the Fellows group. It's important for the Fellows to be viewed as a group of expert resources, not as an elite group. Additionally, collaborating with other professional groups such as NONPF and specific academic programs to promote advanced practice nursing as a whole and thus having a positive impact on patient outcomes. This would provide unification as a whole to strengthen our role and position.

KW: *What advice would you give to yourself during your Induction year?*

EB: I would say – “You really do deserve this....so get on with it! Step up and engage in the activities of the Fellows. Gain confidence in your ability to advance practice and improve patient outcomes.” For instance, when I was Chair of the Fellows, I was able to work with nurses in China to improve their research and patient care curricula and broaden the scope of nursing practice there. Being a Fellow was quite influential in their decision to invite me to work with them.

KW: *How would you like to be remembered?*

EB: The hallmark of a great mentor is that one's mentees exceeded the accomplishments of the mentor. I would like to be remembered as the mentor who empowered those whom I mentored to go on to achieve great things. Mostly, I want to be remembered as one who really cared about the health of all populations, one who was an able mentor, a great preceptor and a knowledgeable teacher. In the military, there is a principle of augmenting the forces. One does this by being really good at what you do and then passing those skills on so that those with whom you come in contact benefit, learn, and exceed your accomplishments. I want to be remembered as one who augmented the forces of health care and made a positive difference.

KW: *What advice would you give to new nurse practitioners?*

EB: Education is #1. Never ever stop learning. Always be open to learning. Remember what you learn now maybe different in two (2) years. Know that there is a huge learning curve throughout your professional life. Be accepting of constructive advice. Active use of the evidence base data will likely support your credibility. Remember that we are nurses first, and our role is a calling, not just a job.

KW: *What advice would you give to present fellows?*

EB: Becoming a Fellow is a service and a working credential, not just something that you can put on your CV. With the acceptance of the Fellow title, you must continue to demonstrate how

your fellowship will improve patient outcomes. It is not a capstone of your career, but a recognition of your expertise and your increasing dedication to patient care.

KW: *What do you see in the future?*

EB: I see nurse practitioners saving healthcare in the US. The emphasis that nurse practitioners have is not just in illness care – but an emphasis on health and restoration as well. I see Nurse Practitioners becoming more politically wise and active and championing health system change to better serve all populations.

Interview submitted on 9/7/18