



Ms Gale Adcock MSN, FNP, FAAN, FAANP is a family nurse practitioner and first nurse practitioner that was elected to serve in the state legislature representing House District 41. She beat a two-time incumbent and served from 2015 – 2023. She was then elected to the State Senate representing the 16<sup>th</sup> District. Prior to her House and Senate positions she served on the Cary, North Carolina, City Council from 2007 to 2014. She was Chief Health Officer at SAS Institute, a developer of analytic software until 2020. She received her BSN from East Carolina University and a MSN from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has been a family nurse practitioner since 1987. She served as president of the North Carolina Nurses Association, chair of the North Carolina Center for Nursing, and as a 2-term member of the North Carolina Board of Nursing. She is a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She has received numerous awards and honors, including the Barbara Thoman Curtis Award for political activism from the American Nurses Association in 2018.

#### Interview Abstract:

Ms. Adcock began her political career as a Cary Town Council member (2007-2015). In addition to making town related decisions, she also served Mayor Pro-Tem where she fulfilled mayoral duties when the mayor was unavailable. The position offered opportunities to preside at televised Council meetings, officiate at quasi-judicial hearings, participate in ground breaking ceremonies and interact with community members. As Chief Health Officer at SAS Institute, she developed a primary care model to provide 24/7 primary care for 13,000 employees and family members. She was encouraged to run for the District 41 North Carolina House in 2014. She served 2 terms and then was elected to the North Carolina State 16<sup>th</sup> District in 2022. She is currently serving her first term as state senator.

#### Short Biography:

Ms. Adcock was born in Martinsville, Virginia and moved to North Carolina to complete her BSN at East Carolina University in 1976. She received her Masters' degree and an FNP

certificate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1987. She joined that staff at SAS Institute in Cary, North Carolina in 1991 and was promoted to Chief Health Officer in 2.5 years. She worked SAS for over 20 years, developing a primary care center for employees and their families. She served on the Cary town council and was elected to the North Carolina state House in 2014 and served two terms before being elected to the State Senate in 2022. She served as President of the North Carolina Nurses Association served as a 2-term member of the North Carolina Board of Nursing. She is a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She is married with two children.

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Gale Adcock

Interview

AANP Oral History Project



Gale Adcock MS, FNP, FAANP

State Senator, 16<sup>th</sup> District, North Carolina

The following interview was conducted by Pat Alpert in 2014 when Ms. Adcock was running for her first term as North Carolina House District 41 representative. She was running against a two term Republican representative.

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You can feel the electricity in the air; the excitement and anticipation mounts as phones ring off the hook and volunteers go door to door. This November voters will go to the polls to cast their votes for their chosen candi- dates.

In North Carolina, voters will decide if Gale Adcock will become the first nurse practitioner to serve in the state legislature, representing House District 41. Gale, one of our Fellows, filed for office in February and is running against a two-term incumbent. She did not have a primary election and is the Democratic candidate in the November 4 general election. When asked why she wanted to take on this challenge she replied, “I’ve talked with many constituents in my district and they convinced me that now is the time to run”. She has been interested in doing this for a long time because the state legislature focuses on issues that concern her—education, health care, economic development and

environmental protection.

Gale is no newcomer to the political arena. She is currently serving a second term on the Cary Town Council (2007-2011; 2011-2015). As a Council member she makes decisions on issues such as land use, residential density, water quality, infrastructure, budget, and public transportation. In addition to representing one quarter of Cary's 148,000 citizens as a District Representative, Gale is also Cary's Mayor Pro-Tem, a position she has held since 2011. As Mayor Pro-Tem she fulfills mayoral duties when the Mayor cannot. This position has offered her opportunities to pre- side at televised Council meetings, officiate at quasi-judicial hearings, be the 'face of Cary' at ribbon-cuttings and groundbreakings, and bring official Town greetings to businesses and professional groups.

Gale has also served in other statewide leadership positions, including the Blue Ribbon Task Force on the State Health Plan for Teachers and State Employees; the NC Board of Nursing; the NC Center for Nursing; the Legislative Study Commission on Access to Health Insurance; the NC Health Planning Commission; and as a Special Voter Registration Commissioner for the Wake County (NC) Board of Elections. In addition to her responsibilities as a councilwoman, Gale is also the Chief Health Officer at SAS, a global business analytics software company.

Her extensive experience in government, politics and the nursing profession make Gale an ideal candidate for District 41 which has historically been a 'swing district' (winnable by either party). This race is viewed by both parties and by political pundits as the most competitive House race in the state. It is also projected to be the most expensive.

Gale credits her nursing experience as the foundation for being an effective politician. She believes that nurses have an innate ability to use the nursing process in other settings. Nursing has taught her strong communication skills and the ability to relate to people. Her grassroots approach has brought her face-to-face with residents in her district.

These interactions have helped form the three core issues of her platform: (1) public education funding, 2) a strong economy, and 3) access to healthcare.

Born in Martinsville, Virginia, Gale moved to North Carolina in 1976 to complete her BSN at East Carolina University. She received a Masters' degree and the FNP certificate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1987. She joined SAS in 1991 as a staff FNP and was promoted to the top leadership position in the company's corporate health services less than 2 1/2 years later. Over her 20 years at the helm, SAS' onsite Health Care Center has grown from a 17 staff member urgent care model to a 24/7 primary care model with a \$5M budget, 35,000 sq. ft. building and 58 staff members caring for 13,000 employees and family members. Her staff includes ten FNPs, four family physicians, eleven nurses, three nutritionists, three physical therapists and one psychologist. The SAS healthcare model has been featured on 60 Minutes and Good Morning America and in Harvard Business Review, Sloane Business Management and The New York Times.

Looking back at her relatively quick trip to the top job as Chief Health Officer Gale insists that she was luckily in the right place at the right time with the right skills. She does not view her- self as 'the boss'. Her attitude is that she works for 58 professionals and that her primary responsibility is to get them the resources and time they need to do their best work.

Gale holds a similar view of her position as a councilwoman. She quips that she works for 148,000 Cary residents. Her opportunity to run for an open Council seat in 2007 was again, being in the right place, at the right time with the right skills.

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