



MARILYN HOCKENBERRY UNITED STATES

Dr. Marilyn Hockenberry is the Director of Global HOPE Nursing and a tenured Professor of Pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine. In her current role with Global HOPE, Dr. Hockenberry provides expertise from her clinical, education, and research experiences to develop the curriculum to teach others about how to care for children with oncology and hematology diseases in sub-Saharan Africa. Dr. Hockenberry is a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.

In 2016, Dr. Hockenberry was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau International Research Hall of Fame. This international award is given to nurse researchers who have achieved significant and sustained international recognition for their work that has impacted the profession and people it serves. Dr. Hockenberry is recognized for her research program that focuses on symptoms associated with childhood cancer treatment.

She has over 140 professional publications and received continuous research funding for 20 years. She is the senior editor for the Wong Pediatric Nursing textbooks used around the world.

Dr. Hockenberry was among the first to specialize as a nurse practitioner in the care of children with cancer. She has spent most of her career practicing as a clinical nurse expert. She is a member of the SIOPI Nursing Network Steering Committee and the SIOPI Scientific Committee.

"Fight for the things that you care about but do it in a way that will lead others to join you" Ruth Bader Ginsburg

On Relationships that Influenced My Career

As a young nurse practitioner, I worked with many individuals who had great influence on my career development. I was one of the first nurses to attend the pediatric oncology nurse practitioner program at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The role was new and many physicians as well as nurses did not understand it. After completing my training, I had the distinction of working with Dr. David Poplack. Dr. Poplack is one of the physicians who believed in the pediatric oncology nurse practitioner role and had great faith in my own role as a young nurse leader. During my journey at Texas Children's Hospital, he supported the creation of an advanced practice role that truly reflected how important this position can be when caring for children with cancer and their families. At times his clarity in the advanced practice role far exceeded many of us who practiced in the role every day. His belief in me gave me great confidence and strength and to this day I am exceedingly grateful to him.

Dr. Ki Moore was my research mentor and colleague for many years. We worked together on several funded clinical studies evaluating the long-term effects of CNS-directed treatment including interventions to improve outcomes among children with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Dr. Moore was an exceptional mentor in that she was more than a teacher; she was a colleague and trusted friend over the years. Her exceptional research expertise served as a nurse scientist role model for me. Her focus on research integrity and ethical principles guiding the conduct of research made a significant impression on me as a young researcher. I am thankful for the wonderful opportunity I had to learn from such an amazing nurse scientist.

On Challenges and Overcoming Them

The pediatric oncology nurse practitioner role was new to childhood cancer centers when I began my career. I remember in my first position many questioned the advanced practice role and felt we were trying to practice as a physician. I had several encounters that I felt were unfair and unfounded. A few days into my first role as a nurse practitioner, a physician told me that he could never feel comfortable

with a nurse performing medical procedures such as a bone marrow or lumbar puncture. How did I respond? I decided the best way to act was to show that I was competent and proficient with performing these procedures. In a few short months, this same physician started asking me to take over when he had trouble performing a procedure. Looking back, I feel the early years focused on demonstrating that I was competent in the advanced practice role, and I always felt I had to work harder at proving myself. This constant vigilance in being the best made me stronger.

My role as a nurse scientist produced many challenges. As a new PhD in a clinical setting, there was little time to pursue research. I realized to succeed as a researcher, grant funding must be obtained. Facing this challenge, I set out to find other nurse scientists to collaborate with on several research proposals. Partnerships with other nurse scientists resulted in many research grants being funded over the years. Realizing the importance of collaboration with other nurse scientists, we established a network of nurse scientists in pediatric oncology through the Children's Oncology Group Nursing Committee. This network made it easier to work together to promote nursing research in our specialty.

On Balancing Career and Other Life Responsibilities

I cannot stress enough the importance of family and friends. I also realize the importance of learning how to separate my professional and personal life so they can remain in harmony. I have found over the years that some things we experience as pediatric oncology nurses should not be shared with others who may not understand, especially our struggles with grief and loss of a child we cared for. It took some time to accept that my choice in becoming a pediatric oncology nurse was mine alone and I needed to find other ways to sustain my professional well-being. I realized I did not want my family and friends to experience the sadness I sometimes felt when caring for children with cancer. This resulted in a clear balance of my professional and personal life.

My Words of Wisdom for the Next Generation of Female Leaders

Follow your heart and do not be discouraged along the way. Many individuals in your life will be well meaning but can distract you on what you want to become in your professional life. If you focus on what really matters in your professional life, then you will not be discouraged or disappointed. Dream big and stay the course. As you become seasoned in your career you will realize that the struggles faced along the way are all worth it. There will be times when you feel you do not have the strength to support the children and families you care for. Look inside yourself to find that inner strength; it will carry you through the darkest of times and the brightest days as well. Never forget to take time to acknowledge all the good you do as a pediatric oncology nurse.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg said "Fight for the things that you care about but do it in a way that will lead others to join you." This rings true for those who have spent their careers in the pediatric oncology specialty. I realize the approach taken to every difficult encounter greatly influences the outcome.