Mary Elizabeth Carnegie

Honorary Degree Citation

Mary Elizabeth Carnegie
Doctor of Humane Letters
May 23, 2004

As an author, educator, and researcher, Mary Elizabeth Carnegie, you investigated, chronicled, and preserved the history of African American nurses in the United States. And as a nurse, a pioneer, and a leader, you have made history, breaking through racial roadblocks, championing the cause of the black nurse for more than 50 years, and paving the way to a more integrated future.

You were born in Baltimore, Maryland, and received your initial nursing education through a diploma program at the Lincoln School of Nurses. This was followed by a bachelor of arts degree from West Virginia State College, a master of arts degree from Syracuse University, and a doctor of public administration degree from New York University.

One of your earliest groundbreaking achievements was being the first black nurse appointed to the board of the Florida Nurses Association. You were living in the South in the 1940s, faced with the rules and realities of segregation, and you helped to break down the barriers. Even then, your struggle did not end until 1949, when you were officially elected not just as a courtesy member but as a legitimate member of that board.

You continued to exhibit commitment to the advancement of the nursing profession as well as to the advancement of black and other minority nurses. You were employed at the American Journal of Nursing from 1953 until 1978 and remain editor emeritus of Nursing Research. You have written, edited, and contributed chapters to nearly 20 books and are the author of the award-winning The Path We Tread: Blacks in Nursing.

You initiated the baccalaureate nursing program at Hampton University, where the archives are named in your honor. You served as the president of the American Academy of Nursing from 1978 to 1979 and chair of the ANA's Minority Fellowship Program Advisory Committee from 1988 to 1999. You served as dean and professor of the School of Nursing at Florida A&M University from 1945 to 1953. Since retiring in 1978, you have served as an independent consultant for scientific writing and as distinguished visiting professor at Hampton University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and Pennsylvania State University in University Park.

Recognized by your peers in the nursing community, you have received numerous honors for your contributions, including the Estelle Osborne Award from New York University; induction into Columbia University's Teachers College Hall of Fame; the M. Elizabeth Carnegie Endowed Chair established at Howard University; and the American Nurses Association Mary Mahoney Award.

For your significant contributions to the development of nursing as a profession, science, and discipline, and for being a role model for teacher-scholars, academic administrators, and organizational leaders in the African-American community as well as the entire community of nurses, Pace University is honored to confer upon you the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereunto.

Aniello A. Bianco '61
Chairman, Board of Trustees

David A. Caputo
President, Pace University

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