

# Oral history Sandy McMillan, RN, PHN 2010

Sandy McMillan (13:58-18:27)

MB: My name is Melissa Bayne and we're in Wilmington, North Carolina on Thursday October 28th, 2010 conducting a nursing interview for the Public Health Association conference.

What is your name?

SM: Sandy McMillon.

MB: And when were you born?

SM: November the 16th (unintelligible).

MB: And where did you grow up?

SM: In Lenoir County, Kinston, North Carolina.

MB: Why did you decide to become a nurse and what most attracted you to nursing?

SM: I enjoyed taking care of the sick.

MB: Where and when did you go to nursing school?

SM: 1985 I graduated from Fayetteville Tech Community College in Fayetteville, NC.

MB: Please tell me a little about your nursing education, especially as it relates to community or public health.

Why did you decide to become a community health nurse?

SM: At the time it was better for my schedule and my family, the hours, the working hours. And I wanted some more experience working in a different area of nursing.

MB: Please tell me about your first job in community health.

SM: When I came to the health department, the Cumberland county health department in Fayetteville in 1987 I started, at that time we were all phases, meaning we did clinics, we did home visiting covering the district, and we also worked in the schools. So it was a heavy workload but I got a lot of good experience and I enjoyed it. I've been with the health department on and off three times and this is my third time back.

MB: Could you describe your current position?

SM: I'm a school health team leader of the school nurses.

MB: Please tell me your most memorable story about community health nursing. This can be a time you made a significant contribution to your community, or a time when something went horribly wrong, or something surprising that happened to you as a community health nurse. Or a memory of a nurse who inspired you. Or anything else you would like to share.

SM: Okay. My second time working for the health department, a satellite health department out in Spring Lake which is a few miles out... (Unintelligible). It was like a mini health department,

and I was the charge nurse assigned there. So setting that up I got a lot of experience about how to set up a small health department that covered all the major things we did at a larger health department.

MB: Is there a story you would like to share about a nursing experience?

SM: Yes. I can recall one time I had to do a vision screening on kindergarten student. I completed the vision screening and took the student back to the classroom, and as I was getting ready to take the student into the classroom the student looked up at me and said "Why do you not have any eyebrows?". And I thought, wow I don't think there's anything wrong with your vision. But community health is a wonderful area of nursing to work in, to work with people.

MB: If you had to do it again would you become a community health nurse? Why or why not?

SM: Yes I would. Because of the flexibility. There's so many areas that you can go into.

MB: Is there anything else you would like to share with nurses in the future who are interested in community health nursing in 2010?

SM: Yes, I would like to encourage you to do it and you can do it.

MB: Alright well thank you very much.