

Wanda Tart

Wanda Tart Oral History

HP: Alright I am Holly Preston I am a UNCW student I am conducting this interview in Wilmington NC on October 28,2010 at the Public health association Conference

HP: Can you start of by telling us your name

WT: My name is Wanda Tart

HP: Okay and where did you grow up

WT: I grew up in North Carolina in (unintelligible) county originally

HP: Okay can you tell me why you became a nurse what attracted you to this profession

WT: I think I was born to be a nurse I don't think there was a time in my life that I ever wasn't a nurse I think public health was a natural progression of who I was destined to be

HP: Okay where and when did you go to nursing school

WT: I went to school at Sampson Tech I was the second class to ever go through Sampson Tech now called Sampson Community College and I received my associate degree and I finished that in 1975 and latter on I went back for my bachelors at Methodist College in Fayetteville NC um from that I have enjoyed a long career

HP: Um can you tell me the community background your nursing education gave you

WT: Well as far as the community aspect I was very fortunate to go very far with my associates degree to be exposed to the community because I had nurses that were from baccalaureate or master level who introduced that and I did a rotation in my bachelor's program in public health in Cumberland County that would lead to the last 23 years of my career

HP: And so why did you decide to become a community health nurse is there anything in particular that persuaded you to go into that particular field

WT: Well I think I just felt at home there one of the things I realized early on was that I like to take good care of a patient one on one but to be able to take care of the population which was my patient was even better and to make a difference for so many people took ownership in a whole new perspective in different way

HP: Can you tell me about your first job in community health

WT: Oh yes I can hahaha I can tell you my first job in community health it was very interesting I had a rotation in community health and I started out my first day in orientation and I only had half a day so my second assignment on the first day was to go to the immunization clinic so I went to the immunization clinic and met the nurse who eventually would get sick that day and go home so I became the immunization nurse that day until her replacement was found what was interesting was that it was the day that the children were out of school because they were under immunized and the law said they could not attend school so we had the world coming in that day so very early on I realized the importance of prevention

HP: Right so would you consider that one of your most memorable events that occurred

WT: I probably have about 23 years of events that have occurred but I think responding to the community needs has been a theme through out the 23 years that I have had and I have been in communal disease I have been on the first team in bio terrorism response and back as a DON so it is just a natural progression for me

HP: So if you were to become a community health nurse again would you follow in those foot steps again

WT: I wouldn't even blink before I did it

HP: Is there anything else you would like to share for future nurses that might be interested going into community health

WT: Yes because I think if you learn from each experience that you go to that you realize that experience takes you to the journey to be on from that day on immunization I would find myself on many I would find myself responding before their was

a time of emergency response protocol responding to flash floods which there were no how to do it books and so you would find yourself and I remember being called to serve and I was at a flood shelter and 80 plus people have been pulled from a nursing home and they were not identified their nursing team was not with them they had massive needs the fire men came in with two bags one was medicines floating in a bag and the other one was a bag of teeth so surviving that night with 80 plus people who didn't know who they were I didn't know who they were I had no teeth no medicines it was truly a preparedness event that would teach me how important it will be to enhance our practice and it laid a foundation to response latter on

HP: Well Thank you so much for your time we really appreciate it