

SPOTLIGHT ON ORNAC MEMBERS

AN INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA MUSHAYANDEBVU RN, CPN(C), ORNAC PRESIDENT

Submitted by: Heather Dow, ORNAC Executive Director.

Barbara Mushayandebvu has been a Registered Nurse in the OR since 1985. She has worked in several OR environments in Zimbabwe, South Africa, the UK, and Canada and so brings a global perspective to the ORNAC Board. After 14 years at the Peter Lougheed Centre in Calgary she moved to Ottawa for 2 years, where she worked at both the Queensway Carlton Hospital and the Civic Campus of The Ottawa Hospital, and has recently returned to Calgary and Peter Lougheed Centre. Barbara has experience in all surgical specialties and has worked as a Clinical Leader and Clinical Nurse Educator.

Barb served as ORNAA president from 2010 to 2012, ORNAC Journal Editorial Chair from 2009 to 2015, the ORNAC Board member representing Alberta from 2009 to 2012, and was Co-Chair of the 2015 ORNAC National Conference, and is currently serving as ORNAC President (2017-2019). Barb has been happily married to Martin, for 33 years, and they have 2 beautiful daughters. The three of them are her rocks and anchors and she wouldn't know what to do without their love and support.



Barbara Mushayandebvu
RN, CPN(C).

What was it about perioperative nursing that first attracted you?

The challenges of working in an environment that is not static and that challenges your mind, body and soul. Being the patient's advocate and their voice when they cannot speak is such a privilege and honour and I take it quite seriously. Working as a team with surgeons, anesthesiologists, respiratory therapists, and other colleagues is so rewarding.

How has your role in the OR changed over the years?

One change has been the never-ending increase in technology and its integration into our daily work life. This is both exciting and challenging as we constantly strive to keep up with

the new advances. But the one constant is that there is still nothing out there that replaces the human touch!

What continuing education has supported your journey?

After completing an in-house post graduate course in perioperative nursing in Zimbabwe in 1985. I also wrote the CNA Certification exam when I first came to Canada. ORNAC has been the source of most of my continuing education throughout my career in Canada. I attended conferences at all levels and take advantage of any opportunity to network with others. Being involved in leadership roles within ORNAC has also taught me many things that I use in my life even outside of work situations.

SPOTLIGHT ON ORNAC MEMBERS (CONT.)

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How have your mentors influenced you as a leader?

I have had a lot of people cross my path who I consider mentors – too many to name but I am grateful to them all. It is true that it takes a village... and I am proof of that. Having lived, and worked, in 4 different countries I have had the privilege of finding great mentors in each place I lived. Seeing the passion they held for perioperative nursing and their commitment to teaching the next generation has inspired me to want to take the same approach. Their inspiring passion for patient advocacy has become the pillar of my practice. My goal to lead by listening, setting an example, using strong communication, and having unwavering integrity and passion was inspired by my mentors.

Tell us about your involvement with ORNAC.

My journey with ORNAC began at the local level as a hospital representative in Alberta. I then went on to become President-Elect, and then President, of the South Central Operating Room Nurses Association (SCORNA) district. While serving on the Operating Room Nurses of Alberta Association (ORNAA) Board, as the representative for SCORNA, I went on to be elected as President-Elect, and then President, of ORNAA which resulted in me representing ORNAA on the ORNAC Board. In this role I volunteered to be the Editorial Committee Chair for what is now the ORNAC Journal (formerly Canadian Operating Room Nursing Journal). I held this position for 6 years and it kept me very connected with ORNAC and involved in helping to drive change through the Journal. I also served as Co-Chair for the 2015 ORNAC National Conference and, at this conference, I was elected as

ORNAC's President-Elect in the first national election ever held by ORNAC.

As I moved into the role of President, in May 2017, I was looking toward the future and the opportunity to lead, inspire, and encourage team work on the board. I believe that ORNAC's mandate to advocate for perioperative registered nursing practice and patient safety, and its ability to implement strategies that will support sustainability and member engagement, are key factors in our profession's future. I am thrilled to be able to continue to be a part of this at the national level.

What was your motivation to join the ORNAC leadership team?

I believe in being involved so that I can contribute to change. I understand the value of the work that ORNAC does and want to see the organisation succeed.

How did your time as the Journal's Editorial Chair influence you as a nurse and leader?

I am so privileged to have had the opportunity to be the ORNAC Journal Editorial Chair for 6 years. During my time in this role I oversaw the transition of the journal from the Canadian Operating Room Nursing Journal to the larger and full-colour ORNAC Journal... and then on to a fully bilingual version of our peer reviewed journal. This experience has given me skills in people and time management which I now use in my daily work. It has also made me acutely aware of the shortage of research in the field of perioperative nursing and the need for more research to support our profession. As one of ORNAC's leaders I have made it a priority to educate and

find resources to help perioperative nurses across Canada in order to enable them to conduct research and publish papers related to perioperative nursing.

How do you feel leadership skills have contributed to your role in nursing?

One of my mentors once told me one does not have to have the title of Manager or Leader to take on a leadership role. Each and every one of us possesses the skills to mentor, guide, and lead others. It's sometimes the little things we do for each other that make us leaders. In my daily interactions with my co-workers and patients I am, in one way or another, teaching. This skill has been honed by my work with ORNAC and the knowledge I have gained from interactions with board members and other stakeholders across Canada.

What advice would you give Perioperative RNs interested in developing leadership skills?

I would say to those RNs that being involved in ORNAC, at any level, will help develop leadership skills that can be used throughout your personal and work life. It is such a strengthening experience and I highly recommend it.

Any last words of wisdom?

"Love what you do, do what you love, and you will not work a day in your life." - Marc Anthony 🍁

