

An MD Anderson Story About: **MD Anderson Culture**



Barbara L. Summers, PhD (ret.)

Former Chief Nursing Officer
and Head, Division of Nursing

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A Place of Hope

[O]ne of the things that I will long remember is as I was on the plane flying to Houston, I was asking myself, “Now, where is Houston in Texas? I don’t really know. Maybe they have cowboys and tumbleweeds and that kind of thing there” I checked into my hotel room, and the next morning I took the shuttle from the Houston Marriott ... and it dropped me off in front of the Clark Clinic lobby. And I walked into that lobby... and I had the opportunity to stand there for a few minutes and just take in what was MD Anderson, and it grabbed my heart and it hasn’t let go of me since then. Because as I got here, I saw patients and their family members who were sitting in the lobby and you could sense palpably hope in the atmosphere. There was just a tremendous sense of hope. And I felt at home, and I have not felt otherwise since then.

This is not a depressing place to be. It’s a very hopeful and filled-with-joy place to be that occasionally has sadness ...but there is so much joy and so much hope here. And the gifts that we are given in form of generosity of spirit from the patients and their families, they’re just invaluable, absolutely invaluable.

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About This Content

This interview clip was taken from an in-depth interview conducted for the Making Cancer History Voices Oral History Project. This ongoing project currently contains almost 400 interview hours with MD Anderson institution builders.

The transcript has been edited from the original.

The content is available for all uses.

To explore the full interview go to: <http://mdanderson.libguides.com/SummersB>

About the speaker:

Barbara L. Summers, PhD served as Chief Nursing Officer and Head of the Division of Nursing from 2003 until 2015, when she retired.

Interview Clip Identification:

Clip ID: Summers,B_02_12_A-Place-of-Hope

Session number and date: 02, 04-01-2014

Segment: 12

Clip category: MD Anderson Culture

Citations: Please provide the following information

Interview Subject's name, Clip Title, Date of Session, Historical Resources Center, Research Medical Library, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

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