

Featured Nurse Leader

Gregory Howard, LPN

Gregory Howard, LPN, has never been content to just work his eight hours a day then go home and become a *couch potato*. After receiving his education at Stillman College and Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, graduating in 1982, Gregory decided to make a difference in the world by becoming a leader – locally, statewide and on the national level. Greg is past president of the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses (NFLPN) Association and a nursing leader at the Tuscaloosa Veteran's Administration Medical Center (TVAMC).



After joining TVAMC in 1986, Greg worked in many acute care areas including intensive, rehabilitation and outpatient care. Greg has been actively involved on the LPN professional standards board, is Safety Officer for the primary care outpatient unit and chaired the 2006 Nursing Day activities.

Greg's interest in educational and practice standards for LPNs was recognized in 1991 when he was appointed to the Alabama Board of Nursing, serving in various positions, and where he continues to remain involved. He is also a speaker presenting on LPN practice in multiple venues.

He has been active in his state and national professional organizations since 1983 serving in various offices for both the Alabama and National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses. Greg most recently served as president of the NFLPN from 2002-2006. A few of his many awards include the NFLPN *Nurse of the Year* award, 1986, NFLPN Outstanding Service award, 1989, Outstanding Service to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) 1997-1998, and Outstanding Black Nurse in Alabama in 2003.

In 2004 Greg was invited to participate in the Tobacco Free Nurses Task Force. Since then, Greg's tobacco control activities have spread to his local, state and national professional organizations. As LPNs have one of the highest rates of smoking (28%) among health care professionals, TFN appreciates all of Gregory's efforts to reach out to the LPN community to assist them with their personal smoking cessation efforts as well as efforts to help patients quit.

Greg believes it is important to introduce the students in the LPN program to tobacco cessation early in their careers as nurses. During his presidency, the NFLPN promoted the Tobacco Free Nurses Initiative in their national magazine, distributed TFN materials throughout the state and included a link to TFN on their website (<http://www.nflpn.org>). His workplace is smokefree and has run a smoking cessation program for patients for many years. Their newest smoking cessation initiative is promoting the National Cancer Institute-sponsored Quitline, 1-800-QuitNow, and website, www.smokefree.gov. During Greg's tenure as president, the Board of Directors of the NFLPN became 100% smoke-free also.

In January 2007, Greg was the keynote graduation ceremony speaker at the Paramedical and Technical School of Cebu and Iloilo City, Philippines where he shared TFN materials with LPN students, expanding the reach of TFN to The Philippines, a country with high rates of smoking

For those who would be a nurse leader, Greg suggests, *"Getting involved and sticking to the task is key. We can use the chain letter analogy of passing the word to all that we know or to those who will listen."*

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