



## Honorary Alumna

*Cynthia W. Vanek, DNP, MSN, RN, CNAA*

Alumni

Cynthia W. Vanek, DNP, MSN, RN, CNAA, is an executive leader in nursing who has spent decades in service to the profession and to Duke University. She is an adjunct faculty member at Southern New Hampshire University, where she teaches leadership development in health care. She also offers independent contractor services designed to help health care systems improve nursing and operating services.

Vanek has dedicated 42 years to the profession of nursing. She began her career in pediatric nursing at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, New York, and led the effort to open the hospital's pediatric intensive care unit, the first in upstate New York.

During her extensive career in nursing, she has held numerous leadership positions, including chief nursing officer at Good Samaritan Medical Center in West Palm Beach, Florida, where she led the center's affiliation agreement with Duke University Medical Center, which created the Helen and Harry Gray Cancer Institute at Good Samaritan Medical Center. This agreement also commenced a 24-year relationship dedicated to excellence in nursing practice between Vanek and Duke Health. In addition, Vanek was a senior vice president and chief operating officer at Indian River Medical Center in Vero Beach, Florida. While there, she led affiliations with Duke Heart Center and Duke Cancer Institute.

Formerly a consulting associate faculty member at Duke University School of Nursing, Vanek helped the School's distance-learning students find quality clinical placements and mentors in West Palm Beach and in Vero Beach, Florida. Her monthly trips to Duke were focused on aspects of cancer services that were needed in West Palm Beach, such as a patient support program that connected cancer survivors with recently diagnosed patients, a cancer clinical trials program and a genetic testing for cancer program. She served on the board of overseers for the Duke Cancer Institute for six years, and from 2011 to 2017, on the School of Nursing's Board of Advisors.

Vanek earned a doctor of nursing practice degree from the American Sentinel University. She received bachelor and master of science degrees in nursing from the University of Rochester.