

**Penny King Ericson, MSN, BSN'61**, is dean emerita and professor emerita of the Faculty of Nursing at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) in Canada. Her commitment to education, research and clinical care in nursing is evident from her career accomplishments as well as her life's service to students and her community.

Under her leadership as dean of nursing at UNB from 1988 to 1999, the faculty became a model for the rest of Canada as it responded to the Nurses Association of New Brunswick's decision to make a baccalaureate degree a minimum requirement for entry to nursing practice. She facilitated the development of the faculty's innovative and nationally accredited undergraduate curriculum and fostered the growth of the faculty from a primarily undergraduate school into a multi-site, multi-program professional school, that is responsive to the needs of the community. She oversaw the establishment of a master's degree program in nursing and the introduction of international exchange programs for faculty and students.

As an expert in gerontological nursing, Ericson focused much of her research on Alzheimer's caregiving. She also engaged in collaborative research on violence in military communities. Although she officially retired in 2001, her nursing career did not end. She spent the next four years working part time for the Faculty of Nursing and put courses on the web to



## Lifetime Achievement

*Penny King Ericson, MSN, BSN'61*

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enable distance learning in gerontological nursing and nurses' roles and challenges within the Canadian health care system. Ericson is currently working locally, provincially and nationally to increase the standards of palliative care for hospitals, nursing homes, home care and hospices.

Her love of the arts is exemplified by her work to convert a school built in 1884 into a community arts center. "Without an avenue to express our emotions — art, music, dance and theater — we are not truly mentally healthy," she says.

Ericson cared for her husband who suffered from Parkinson's disease and Lewy body dementia until his death in 2013. During his hospitalization, she was disturbed by the lack of quality care, and after his death, she wrote a

report for the hospital's CEO outlining the challenges and potential solutions. Her report resulted in the formation of a patient/family advisory council, which she co-chairs. In this role, Ericson works with staff and other volunteers to improve care consistent with the national standards for accreditation. In addition, she worked with a local hospice board to establish its first self-contained facility in 2016.

Ericson earned a bachelor of science in nursing degree from Duke University School of Nursing and a master of science in nursing degree from the University of Pennsylvania. She received an honorary doctorate degree from the University of New Brunswick. ■