



Respect Works Here

Community Champion

It was 1957 when **Hugh Carter** arrived from the Caribbean to pursue an opportunity being offered by the Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford to participate in the field of healthcare. It was there that he also met and married his wife.

After a few short years, he and his wife moved to Drumheller then Calgary where he returned to school and studied Respiratory therapy under the guidelines of the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists.

After graduating and working at the Calgary General Hospital for approximately three years, he was hired by the Calgary Foothills Hospital as a Clinical Respiratory Instructor for their student program for several years.

In 1980, he moved to Vernon as the Respiratory Therapy Department Head at Vernon Jubilee Hospital, a position he held for 14 years. After resigning from that job, he worked for Praxair as an on-call Respiratory Therapist where he enjoyed the one-on-one contact with patients in their homes. "I felt I could help them to live the best life they could with their particular respiratory challenge, as I was able to spend more time with them," says Hugh.

But this humble and self-effacing man is hesitant to talk about the many volunteer positions he has held over the years in Vernon. He wants to ensure that those who worked alongside him are given equal recognition, since "we are a team," says Hugh.

People like Mollie Bono whom he happened to meet and learn of volunteer opportunities at the First Nations Friendship Centre where he was asked to be on the board of directors, also serving as a member on the Aboriginal Education Committee.

At the Friendship Centre he learned about the efforts of dental hygienists offering dental care to needy clients and children all of which led to the formation of a steering committee to create a dental access program for low-income residents.

Hugh also speaks highly of Laine Lowe, who was the initiator of this program now known as the Community Dental Access Centre. Located on 31st Avenue, it is now an autonomous resource centre in Vernon.

Hugh also donated his time to teach a quit smoking program since smoking can be detrimental to teeth, as well as health in general.

“ We are a team. ”

~ Hugh Carter

Other examples of volunteer colleagues who Hugh likes to give credit to include: Marie Fleming who initiated the idea and included him in the steering committee that created Vernon's Performing Arts Centre; Roseanne Van Ee, a Naturalist in Vernon who invited him as a member in the early Allan Brooks Nature Centre steering committee; and, again Mollie Bono involving him as a volunteer with the Komasket Music Festival years ago.

When asked about his singing with the Aura Chamber Choir and his involvement with the Astronomy Club Hugh says, "Ah, that's not volunteer stuff. That's passion!"

