

Influential Women Highlights Carmen Ward-Sullivan, PhD, RN, For Excellence In Nursing Leadership And Education

OAKLAND, CA, UNITED STATES, July 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Executive Nurse Leader and Associate Dean at Samuel Merritt University Combines Clinical Expertise, Academic Innovation, and Philanthropic Commitment to Create Meaningful Impact Across Communities

Carmen Ward-Sullivan, PhD, RN, is an accomplished executive nurse leader, educator, researcher, and global health advocate whose career has been defined by service, innovation, and a commitment to improving the lives of others. As Associate Dean for Academic Programs at Samuel Merritt University in San Leandro, California, Dr. Ward-Sullivan continues to shape the future of nursing through academic excellence, leadership development, and a dedication to preparing the next generation of healthcare professionals.



With more than four decades of experience in nursing, Dr. Ward-Sullivan has built a distinguished career that spans clinical practice, research, higher education, and global health initiatives. Her professional journey began in intensive care and coronary care units, where she specialized in cardiac and open-heart surgical care. Working in high-acuity environments early in her career provided her with invaluable insight into complex patient needs and sparked a lifelong interest in cardiovascular health, particularly the relationship between symptoms, treatment, and patient outcomes.

Driven by a desire to expand nursing knowledge and improve patient care, Dr. Ward-Sullivan pursued advanced education and earned her PhD in Nursing from the University of California,

San Francisco. Her doctoral research focused on symptom science, initially examining cardiac symptoms among women and later expanding to breast cancer symptom clusters among patients undergoing chemotherapy. Her scholarly contributions have included publications, research presentations at national and international conferences, and recognition as a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Symptom Science Training Fellow.

Throughout her academic career, Dr. Ward-Sullivan has served in various leadership roles, including clinical faculty member, program director, and associate dean. She has played an instrumental role in advancing nursing education through curriculum development, competency-based education initiatives, and accreditation processes. Her leadership reflects a commitment to ensuring that nursing students receive the knowledge, skills, and preparation necessary to meet the evolving needs of healthcare systems and communities.

Beyond her work in academia, Dr. Ward-Sullivan has dedicated herself to addressing health disparities through global service and philanthropy. Her passion for health equity led her to establish a 16-bed maternity clinic in rural Ghana, helping address maternal health challenges across 11 communities while improving access to essential healthcare services for pregnant women and families. Through this initiative, she has helped create opportunities for improved maternal outcomes and strengthened community-based healthcare resources.

Her commitment to global health and community development has been recognized through leadership appointments and honors, including her role as an enstooled Queen Mother of Development in the New Sawereso-Seinnuah Stool Lands in the Ahafo Region of Ghana. Her enstooled name is HRH Nana Dr. Amma Maanu, Nkosuohemaa of New Sawereso-Seinnuah Stool Lands. This recognition reflects the deep appreciation of the community for her dedication, compassion, and contributions to improving the lives of others.

Dr. Ward-Sullivan is also the Founder of the NYAME DUA Foundation, Incorporated, an organization dedicated to supporting philanthropic, educational, and global health initiatives. Through the foundation and her ongoing service efforts, she continues to promote opportunities that advance healthcare access, education, and community empowerment.

Dr. Ward-Sullivan attributes her success to the strong family foundation and values instilled in her from an early age. Her parents were intentional about encouraging their children to pursue careers that would provide fulfillment, stability, and purpose. Rather than selecting a path for them, they exposed them to different opportunities and encouraged thoughtful reflection about their futures.

A significant part of that guidance was rooted in Christian faith, helping Dr. Ward-Sullivan understand her purpose and recognize how her unique gifts could contribute to society. She believes success is not defined solely by professional achievements but by living in alignment with purpose, service, and meaningful contribution. These principles have guided her decisions throughout her career and continue to influence the way she leads, teaches, and serves.

For young women entering nursing, Dr. Ward-Sullivan encourages intentional relationship-building and mentorship. She believes aspiring professionals should surround themselves with individuals who are already doing the work they hope to pursue, learning from their experiences and asking thoughtful questions about the rewards, challenges, and realities of the profession.

At the same time, she emphasizes that every individual's journey is unique. While learning from others is valuable, Dr. Ward-Sullivan encourages young women to create paths that reflect their own goals, strengths, and values. She believes authenticity is essential and encourages nurses to embrace their voices, perspectives, and individuality rather than changing who they are to gain acceptance.

At the core of Dr. Ward-Sullivan's personal and professional philosophy is authenticity. She believes every person has a unique light and a responsibility to allow that light to shine in every environment they enter. She encourages others to recognize their own value, maintain their standards, and never diminish themselves to make others more comfortable.

Rest, restoration, and reflection are also important principles in her life. Dr. Ward-Sullivan recognizes that continuously giving to others without taking time to recharge can create imbalance. Through intentional moments of reflection, she evaluates the impact of her work and ensures that her service remains meaningful, purposeful, and sustainable.

Her commitment to intentional service was demonstrated during her work in the New Sawereso-Seinnuah Stool Lands. When Divisional Chief HRH Nana Agyemang Duah Katakylie III expressed his desire to name the maternity clinic after her, Dr. Ward-Sullivan encouraged him instead to honor someone who held significance within the community, recognizing the historical importance of the clinic and its role in serving local families. Although he initially accepted her suggestion reluctantly, she was later humbled to discover that her name had been placed above one of the rooms inside the clinic.

Dr. Ward-Sullivan views this recognition as a reflection of the community's tradition of honoring those who have contributed meaningful service. She remains grateful for the acknowledgment while continuing to focus on her mission of improving healthcare, advancing nursing education, and creating opportunities for communities around the world.

Through decades of clinical expertise, academic leadership, and compassionate service, Dr. Carmen Ward-Sullivan continues to inspire healthcare professionals and communities alike. Her work reflects a lifelong commitment to purpose-driven leadership, health equity, and the belief that meaningful change begins with service to others.

Learn More about Dr. Carmen Ward-Sullivan:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/carmen-ward->

[sullivan](#)

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