Wanda Bonnel says that whenever she walks in from the parking lot, she looks up at the buildings and thinks about how lucky she has been to be associated with the KU School of Nursing for more than 30 years.

Her students and peers feel the same way about being associated with her.

Dr. Bonnel earned her Ph.D. in nursing with a minor in gerontology from the KU School of Nursing in 1990. She started as a clinical associate professor here in 1994 and has enjoyed a long and distinguished career ever since. Dr. Bonnel currently serves as an associate professor with tenure.

She was invited by her mentor, Helen Connors, to teach in one of the first online courses at KU. She led a team that received federal funding to start the online educator certificate program. Dr. Bonnel continues to value mentoring and guiding graduate students with adult and geriatric clinical projects as well as with educational scholarship. Dr. Bonnel’s work has contributed significantly to gerontology and nursing education nationwide. She serves as an editorial board member of the Journal of Gerontological Nursing. Among numerous grants, she received funding for two National League for Nursing research studies aimed to improve online faculty teaching skills.

Dr. Bonnel has been recognized regionally and nationally for her teaching expertise. She received a 2008 W. T. Kemper Award for Teaching Excellence and a 2009 Midwest Nursing Research Society Advancement of Science Award. Since her induction in 2009, she has been a fellow of the National League for Nursing’s Academy of Nursing Education, an honor reserved for a select few educators.

“Dr. Bonnel has been a truly exemplary member of the KU School of Nursing faculty,” said Sally Maliski, dean of the KU School of Nursing. “She has set the bar high for education and scholarship and has always been responsive to student needs.”

For these achievements and so much more, the KU Nurses Alumni Association is proud to present the Distinguished Nursing Alumna Award to Wanda Bonnel, PhD’90.

“I have worked hard to help students be successful and support our nursing and healthcare professions and the patients we care for,” Dr. Bonnel said. “It is really great to be acknowledged by the school that means so much to me.”