Distinguished Nursing Alumna
Lynelle N.B. Pierce, MS, N'81, CCRN, CCNS, FAAN
Clinical Specialist, Critical Care, The University of Kansas Health System
Clinical Assistant Professor, KU School of Nursing
University of Kansas Medical Center

In the words of KU School of Nursing Clinical Assistant Professor Delois Laverentz, Lynelle Pierce is "a visionary and a change agent who has made an impact on the lives of countless patients."

Since she earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the KU School of Nursing in 1981 followed by a master's degree from the University of Maryland at Baltimore in 1986, Pierce's change-making impact has been at the hospital, state, national and international levels.

An internationally known expert in mechanical ventilation, Pierce is the sole author of the definitive nursing textbook on the subject, which is in its second edition and has been translated into Chinese and Portuguese. She is also a leader in sedation management. In 2005, Pierce pioneered a sedation assessment tool for critically ill patients. Her work related to daily awakening of sedated, mechanically ventilated patients resulted in decreased days on the ventilator, sedation use, and length of stay in a number of ICUs at The University of Kansas Health System (TUKHS).

She initiated the molecular adsorbent recirculating system (MARS) program at the health system to treat acute liver failure. She co-chaired a committee to prevent catheter-associated urinary tract infections, and the health system saw a 33% decrease in these infections. Since 2006, she has been the Program Coordinator across eight ICUs for the continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT) program, recognized for its exceedingly high quality.

Moreover, she has educated thousands of nurses and doctors at the local, regional and national level in a range of skills and helped revise the KU School of Nursing undergraduate curriculum. In the late 1990s she was a member of the Kansas EMS/Trauma Policy Planning Group and helped create the Kansas State Trauma System.

Pierce was named Magnet Nurse of the Year by the health system in 2017. In fall 2019, she was inducted into the American Academy of Nursing, an elite group of 2,800 of the country's 4 million registered nurses.

Pierce has two grown daughters, Amanda and Naema, and is an avid gardener. Of this award, she said, "It's exciting to be recognized by the institution where I first grew my roots, where I first formed my identity as a nurse."

For her many achievements, the KU Nurses Alumni Association is proud to present the Distinguished Nursing Alumna Award to Lynelle N.B. Pierce, MS, N'81, CCRN, CCNS, FAAN.