

WISCONSIN WOMEN MAKING HISTORY

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MAY SHIGA HORNBACK

1924–1976

City: Madison

County: Dane

Japanese American nursing educator Dr. May Shiga Hornback introduced innovative televised and telephone-based nursing instruction to students across Wisconsin.

May Shiga was born on May 4, 1924, in Seattle, Washington. Soon after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the government forced people born in Japan who were living on the west coast of the US to move to inland concentration camps. This included May's father, who was sent to the Fort Lincoln Internment Camp in North Dakota. Because they were the children of a person born in Japan, May and her siblings could have also been sent to a camp, but they moved to Montana to avoid this. After that, May moved to Chicago, where she married Vernon Hornback in 1944. After the war, she and Vernon moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where she finished her bachelor's degree at UW–Madison and began working at the Veterans Administration Hospital.

Shiga Hornback went on to become a nationally known nursing educator. In 1956, she began teaching introductory nursing courses at the UW–Madison School of Nursing. By 1963, she had developed one of the first televised nursing courses, which taught the basics of nursing in 17 half-hour video lessons. In 1965, she joined UW–Madison Extension's nursing department, where she managed courses for the Wisconsin Educational Telephone Network and directed an audio reference library project called Nursing Dial Access, which gave nurses all over Wisconsin up-to-date information on nursing care, procedures, equipment, and even legal concerns. This dial-in resource significantly helped nurses practicing in isolated settings like schools, homes, small hospitals, and nursing homes. She also coordinated nursing seminars that covered topics ranging from risk factors for heart disease to employment issues in the nursing workforce.

In 1970, Shiga Hornback received her PhD in adult education from UW–Madison. She was honored by many organizations, including the Wisconsin Nurses Association and the National Conference on Continuing Education in Nursing. She published many articles about nursing education, as well as the book *Continuing Nursing Education*, which was translated into Japanese in 1983. As a member of the UW Coalition of Minority Women, Shiga Hornback helped to make the university a more diverse place.

May Shiga Hornback passed away on July 6, 1976, at 52. In her honor, her family and friends established a scholarship to support nursing educators working on advanced degrees.

To learn more, visit womeninwisconsin.org/profile/may-shiga-hornback