



## Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson

December 21, 1938 - January 7, 2023

It is with tremendous sadness that we share the news that Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson passed away on January 7, 2023, peacefully in her home surrounded by her family. She was 84 years old.

Dr. Gaston-Johansson was an internationally renowned nurse educator, researcher, and clinical practitioner and the first African American woman to be a tenured full professor at Johns Hopkins University (JHU). She said she was inspired to become a nurse in first grade after undergoing a school physical examination by nurses who she thought “looked so good, dressed in all white, white shoes, white outfits, and white hats.”

Dr. Gaston-Johansson was the fourth of five children born to Larry Gaston and Nellie Couslar in 1938 in Hickory, North Carolina. She was a basketball star and graduated valedictorian from Ridgeview High School. Growing up in the segregated south, during high school she walked a mile each Sunday to babysit for a white family. The family was so impressed with her that they offered to pay her college tuition on the condition that “if you see someone, you help them in some kind of way.” That would become a foundation for a life-long call to action to mentor students, junior faculty, and peers.

Dr. Gaston-Johansson studied nursing at Winston Salem State University, a historically Black university, where she made history by receiving the highest

score on the state nursing licensing board exam.

Dr. Gaston-Johansson continued her studies at the University of California, San Francisco, where she received a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) in medical, surgical, and psychiatric nursing. She traveled to Sweden as an exchange student where she met her husband, Dr. Sonny Johansson and raised a family. While raising her four children and working full-time, she earned her PhD in 1985 at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Dr. Gaston-Johansson was a member of the University of Nebraska Medical Center faculty from 1985 to 1993 where she served as an associate professor and the director of nursing research and quality improvement.

Dr. Gaston-Johansson joined the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing (SON) in 1993 as an associate professor and held the Elsie M. Lawler Endowed Chair throughout her tenure at the SON. In 1998, she was promoted to full professor. She simultaneously served as the first female dean at University of Gothenburg in Sweden from 2001-2005 while keeping her appointment at the SON. As dean of the University of Gothenburg, she directed the Department of Health Sciences which included the Schools of Nursing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Health Care Pedagogy. In 2007, she became first chair of the SON's former Department of Acute and Chronic Care. She also served as director of the now-retired Center on Health Disparities Research. Her work and research focused on symptom and pain management, quality of life, breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, and racial and ethnic health disparities.

A scientist with upwards of 100 scientific articles, she was also an inventor, holding US and international patents on the Pain-O-Meter, an assessment tool that provided a standardized way to measure pain and has been used by hospitals in the US and overseas.

In her commitment to mentor others and to promote the establishment of a cadre of racially and ethnically diverse scholars, she always championed her alma mater, Winston Salem State University. An advocate for students, she created and directed the Minority Global Health Disparities Research Training Program, a partnership between Johns Hopkins and Winston Salem State Universities that allowed over 160 undergraduate and graduate students to conduct health disparities research in South Africa, Israel, and Sweden.

During her tenure, Dr. Gaston-Johansson served on the Maryland Governor's Task Force on Healthcare Access and Reimbursement. She received many awards including the Links Inc. International Trends and Service Award, the National Black Nurses Association's Trailblazer Award, Excellence in Nursing awards, and citations from the U.S. Congress for her research efforts. She was a two-time recipient of the Johns Hopkins Diversity Recognition Award. Dr. Gaston-Johansson was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society, International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame and the Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in Sweden. In 2012, Johns Hopkins named her a Distinguished Professor. In 2015, the American Academy Nursing recognized Dr. Gaston Johansson as a "Living Legend," their highest honor bestowed upon those who have far-reaching and sustained impact on nursing and health care.

After retiring in 2014, she cherished spending time with her grandchildren who lived nearby. She loved to laugh, listen to music and savored hosting family for dinner and holidays. Her house was an open door for family, friends, neighbors, visiting researchers, and foreign exchange students. She enjoyed traveling. Some of her favorite places included: San Francisco, Alaska, Cancun, Mexico, Sweden, Japan, South Africa, and Turkey. Dr. Gaston-Johansson was an animal lover who showered her dogs with love and special

treats. She was an avid reader and watcher of news and could discuss politics for hours. A proud member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, since her undergraduate days at Winston Salem State University, Dr. Gaston-Johansson was an active member of the Epsilon Omega and Upsilon Epsilon Omega Chapters in Baltimore, Maryland. In April 2022, she was honored as a “Pearl Soror” by the national organization, for 65 years of membership, sisterhood, and community service.

Dr. Gaston-Johansson was predeceased in death by her parents, her sisters, Helen Crutchfield and Carrie Johansson and brother Larry Gaston. She leaves to cherish her memory and continue her legacy: her son Dr. Patrik Johansson of Seattle, WA; son Christian Johansson and daughter-in-law Lacey Johansson; son Nicholas Johansson, Esq. and daughter-in-law Dr. Crystal Watkins Johansson; daughter Andrea Johansson; nephew Larry Johansson of Phoenix, AZ whom she helped raise as her own; grandchildren, Isaac, Noah, Carter, Morley, Asher, Arden, and Atlas; brother Douglas Gaston and sister-in-law Shirley of San Francisco, CA; brother-in-law Olof Johansson of Sweden; nieces and nephews Harlan and Alvis Crutchfield of Hickory, NC, Frans Johansson of Brooklyn, NY, Sandra Ljung of Sweden; Michael Gaston and Lisa Gaston of San Francisco, CA; Carl Gaston of Augusta GA; Tammie Gaston-Griffin of Birmingham, AL; Warren Gaston, Darryl Gaston, and Donna Jilek of Atlantic City, NJ

Dr. Gaston-Johansson had a remarkable career as a trailblazer for nursing science and throughout her work underscored the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. She has had an indelible impact on the SON, the university, and the nursing profession. In her honor, in May of 2022, Johns Hopkins University renamed the Target Opportunity Program, the Fannie Gaston-Johansson Faculty of Excellence Program. Since 2015 this program has played a key role in increasing faculty diversity at Johns Hopkins University.

Funeral arrangements will be held at March Life Tribute Center, 5616 Old Court Rd, Windsor Mill, MD 21244, with viewing on Thursday, January 26 from 4:00 – 6:00 pm and Friday, January 27 at 9:30 am. Celebration of Life Services will be held on Friday, January 27, 2023, promptly at 10:00 am.

Gifts in memory of Dr. Gaston-Johansson can be made to the Fannie Gaston-Johansson Faculty of Excellence Program on the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing website at <https://www.nursing.jhu.edu> under the Alumni and Giving section and to her alma mater, the School of Health Sciences at Winston-Salem State University at <https://www.wssu.edu/about/offices-and-departments/university-advancement/donate-now.html>. For a WSSU donation, please select the School of Health Sciences under the Department-Operating section and include Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson's name under the Tribute Information section.

# Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### Viewing

JAN 26. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center - Randallstown  
5616 Old Court Road  
Windsor Mill, MD

### Wake

JAN 27. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center - Randallstown  
5616 Old Court Rd  
Windsor Mill, MD 21244  
(410) 655-0110

### Service

JAN 27. 10:00 AM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center - Randallstown  
5616 Old Court Road  
Windsor Mill, MD

# Tribute Wall



“ *View and Download the Funeral Program*

March Life Tribute Centers - June 06, 2023 at 12:36 PM



“ *March Funeral Homes - Laburnum Chapel created a Webcast of funeral for Fannie in memory of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson*



March Life Tribute Centers - January 27, 2023 at 08:47 AM

TK

“ *Tariq Khan purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.*



Tariq Khan - January 26, 2023 at 05:03 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.*



January 26, 2023 at 03:53 PM

RO

“ Renee and Ethan Osborn purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.



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**Renee and Ethan Osborn** - January 26, 2023 at 10:52 AM



“ *Arrive in Style* was purchased for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.



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January 25, 2023 at 10:14 PM

JH

“ *Jeanne Hitchcock* purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.



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**Jeanne Hitchcock** - January 25, 2023 at 05:58 PM

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“ Gifts in memory of Dr. Gaston-Johansson can be made to the Fannie Gaston-Johansson Faculty of Excellence Program on the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing website at <https://www.nursing.jhu.edu> under the Alumni and Giving section and to her alma mater, the School of Health Sciences at Winston-Salem State University at <https://www.wssu.edu/about/offices-and-departments/university-advancement/donate-now.html>. For a WSSU donation, please select the School of Health Sciences under the Department-Operating section and include Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson's name under the Tribute Information section.

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**March Life Tribute Center (Randallstown)** - January 25, 2023 at 01:56 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.



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January 25, 2023 at 10:31 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.



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January 24, 2023 at 09:09 PM



“ *Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson.*



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January 20, 2023 at 01:23 PM



“ *Gifts in memory of Dr. Gaston-Johansson can be made to the Fannie Gaston-Johansson Faculty of Excellence Program on the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing website at <https://www.nursing.jhu.edu> under the Alumni and Giving section and to her alma mater, the School of Health Sciences at Winston-Salem State University at <https://www.wssu.edu/about/offices-and-departments/university-advancement/donate-now.html>. For a WSSU donation, please select the School of Health Sciences under the Department-Operating section and include Dr. Fannie Gaston-Johansson's name under the Tribute Information section.*

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**March Life Tribute Center (Randallstown)** - January 13, 2023 at 09:00 AM



“ *We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always*

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**March Life Tribute Center (Randallstown)** - January 10, 2023 at 10:16 AM