

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Pamela Gunter-Smith

PERSON

Gunter-Smith, Pamela, 1951-

**Alternative Names:** Pamela Gunter-Smith;

**Life Dates:** December 2, 1951-

**Place of Birth:** Nashville, Tennessee, USA

**Work:** York, PA

**Occupations:** Physiologist; University President

## Biographical Note

Provost and academic vice president Pamela J. Gunter-Smith earned her B.S. degree in biology from Spelman College in 1973 and her Ph.D. degree in physiology from Emory University in 1978. She conducted post-doctoral research at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and the University of Texas-Houston Medical School. Gunter-Smith has also participated in notable professional development opportunities, such as the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) Leadership Development Program and the American Council on Education (ACE) Fellowship at the University of Miami.

In 1981, Gunter-Smith began working as a project manager and research physiologist at the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI) where she supervised three independent laboratories and oversaw an independent research program to assess and mitigate the effects of radiation on intestinal physiology. From 1982 to 1992, Gunter-Smith held faculty appointments at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and George Washington University. In 1992, Gunter-Smith was appointed as chair of the biology department and associate provost for science and mathematics at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. During her tenure, she directed the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Biomedical Program, improved the curriculum in the natural sciences, facilitated the development of grants for the natural and social sciences, and was instrumental in providing a number of opportunities for the faculty and students. While at Spelman, she played a major role in fund-raising and developing institutional grants from private foundations and federal agencies. In 2006, she joined Drew University as its first provost and academic vice president. As the chief academic officer, she helped to develop and implement a new vision statement to strengthen the natural science departments. Gunter-Smith has been instrumental in developing a successful strategic plan, which resulted in a twenty-five percent increase in

undergraduate enrollment.

For her efforts and research at the AFRRI, Gunter-Smith received the Director's Award for Distinguished Service in 1992. In 2001, she received the Spelman Presidential Faculty Award for Scholarly Achievement. She received the Spelman College Alumnae Achievement Award in Health and Science in 2005.

Pamela J. Gunter-Smith was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on March 11, 2013.

## Related Entries

**St. Vincent School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**St. Bernard Academy** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Spelman College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.S.**

**Emory University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Ph.D.**

**University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1981 to 1992]

**Research Physiologist/Project Manager**

**Spelman College** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1992 to 2006]

**Porter Professor of Physiology/Chair of Biology/Associate Provost**

**Drew University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1967 to ?]

**Provost and Academic Vice President**

**American Physiological Society** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1998 to 2005]

**Co-Chair, Porter Development Committee**

**AP Biology Redesign Commission** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2006 to 2007]

**Member**

**Center for Allaying Health Disparities Through Research & Education** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 2008 to ?]

**Chair, Project Advisory Committee**

**William Townsend Porter Foundation** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 2010 to ?]

**Member, Board of Directors**

**Higher Education Resources Services (HERS)** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 2010 to ?]

**Meber, Board of Directors**