



## **2025 Alumni Professional Achievement Award**

### **Mrs. Julie Robinson Adams, Class of 1978**

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The Alumni Professional Achievement Award recognizes significant contributions alumni have made to their fields while exemplifying high moral and professional ethics.

Mrs. Julie Robinson Adams is being honored with the 2025 Alumni Professional Achievement Award for her outstanding accomplishments and lifelong dedication to the field of Social Work.

Mrs. Adams earned her Bachelor of Arts in 1978 with a major in Sociology, a minor in Psychology, and completed the university's Social Work Program. She received a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of South Carolina in 1980, a Master's degree in Health Administration and a Certificate in Gerontology from UNC Charlotte in 2001. Early in her career, she obtained her Clinical Social Work License (LCSW), laying the foundation for a distinguished career in service and advocacy.

Mrs. Adams became the first social worker at the Mecklenburg County Department of Public Health. At just 23 years old, she proactively wrote to the Health Director to advocate for the integration of Social Work into the department's interdisciplinary care model. Her initiative led to the creation of the department's first Medical Social Worker position, which she proudly assumed. In this pioneering role, she provided support to clients facing financial hardship, behavioral health challenges and other complex social needs. Her leadership and vision quickly earned her a promotion to Lead Social Worker, where she served for six years, as a consultant for all public health social workers across Mecklenburg County. In addition to leading hiring efforts for social workers, Mrs. Adams played a vital role in shaping departmental practice by providing consulting services to peers and developing social work policies that enhanced service delivery and collaboration within the public health system.

Mrs. Adams was promoted to Community Alternative Program (CAP) Manager in Public Health in 1997, a role she held with distinction for approximately seventeen years. Under her leadership, the Mecklenburg County CAP program grew to become one of the largest in North Carolina. She oversaw teams of social workers and nurses dedicated to helping disabled adults and children remain in their homes rather than transition to institutional care. Her commitment to delivering high-quality, compassionate home-based services was widely recognized, culminating in her being named Public Health Social Worker of the Year for North Carolina in 2002, a testament to her exceptional contributions to public health social work.

After more than three decades in public health, she transitioned back to direct service, focusing on the needs of older adults. She joined Humana Behavioral Health as a Care Manager and later became Care Manager for Humana at Home. In this role, she earned Humana's prestigious People First Award, acknowledging her extraordinary dedication to serving elderly clients. Her impactful work was featured in three separate Humana newsletters, celebrating her success in helping clients navigate and overcome significant challenges.



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She also played a key role on the innovation team, developing resources to support Humana physicians. She was invited to present a client success story at a national Humana management meeting, illustrating the vital role of social work in improving outcomes for older adults.

Mrs. Adams has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to community engagement through her active involvement on numerous boards, committees and public service initiatives. For over twelve years, she has served on the Winthrop University Social Work Advisory Committee, where she aids in shaping the academic and practical direction of the program. She coordinated the placement of Master's-level Social Work students at the Mecklenburg County Department of Public Health, fostering valuable field experiences and strengthening partnerships between academia and public service.

Mrs. Adams also led a collaborative initiative with the Winthrop Social Work Department to conduct community focus groups with caregivers of adults with disabilities in Mecklenburg County. This project provided critical insights into the needs and challenges of caregivers, ultimately leading her to secure a social work grant from the Sisters of Mercy. With this funding, she successfully established a full-time social work intake worker position to better serve the community.

Her leadership extends across numerous local and state-level associations and advocacy groups. She has held several key roles, including Regional Chairperson for the South Piedmont District of NASW, Chairperson of the Aging Coalition for Mecklenburg County, Captain of the United Way's Older Adult Wellness Committee (grant review) and Chairperson of the Social Work Competency Committee for Public Health Social Work. Additionally, she has served as Co-Chairperson for the Social Work Month Annual Community Events, Chairperson of the Nurse Assistant Recruitment and Retention Committee and Chairperson of the Shamrock Senior Center Advisory Committee. Her breadth of service reflects a career dedicated to advancing public health, supporting older adults, and strengthening the social work profession.

Mrs. Adams is deeply committed to civic and charitable service, dedicating her time and compassion to a wide range of community-focused efforts. Her volunteer work reflects a heart for others and a strong sense of purpose, encompassing roles such as assisting at a local thrift store, visiting and encouraging residents in nursing homes, being a part of the welcome team at church and participating in prison ministry.

A native of Clover, South Carolina, she now makes her home in Charlotte, North Carolina, with her husband, Keith Adams.