

Biographical Sketch

Olson Huff, M.D.



Born in an isolated portion of the Cumberland Mountains of eastern Kentucky on August 6, 1936, Olson Huff practiced pediatrics in North Carolina for thirty three years. His career in clinical medicine encompassed many directions which included twelve years in private practice with the remainder focused on children with special health care needs. The last eight years of his work as a clinician were spent as Medical Director of the Mission St. Joseph Hospital's Children's Center in Asheville, North Carolina. That program subsequently became the Children's Hospital of that institution, which serves all of western North Carolina. During those years, he continued to practice developmental pediatrics at the Olson Huff Center for Child Development, a program that he developed at Thoms Rehabilitation Hospital in 1987 and that was named for him in August of 1995. Under his direction, the Olson Huff Center became part of the Mission Children's Hospital in 1999.

Following his retirement from clinical practice and his position as Medical Director of Mission Children's Hospital, he became the pediatric consultant to the Mission Healthcare Foundation. He was named a Senior Fellow with the North Carolina Child Advocacy Institute (now Action for Children North Carolina) and in that position has focused on policy issues for children's health and safety. Currently, in addition to those roles, he serves on a number of boards and commissions. These include the North Carolina Institute of Medicine, the Mountain Area Health Education Center, and the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission. He is the past president of the Board of the North Carolina Pediatric Society Foundation and served for many years on the Board of Directors of Buncombe County Children First, where he also served as board chair. He is a past president of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

He served on the original Board of Directors of the North Carolina Partnership for Children that served to institute Smart Start in North Carolina. He was the chair of the Planning and Oversight Committee of the Partnership Board for many years. He completed his service on that board after 14 years, in 2007.

He holds honorary and emeritus membership in the American Academy of Pediatrics, the North Carolina Medical Society, the North Carolina Pediatric Society and the Buncombe County Medical Society.

Presently he chairs the Task Force on Obesity and Nutrition of the N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission, which has created multiple programs in communities across the state to combat obesity and improve health. He co-chairs the Study Committee on Childhood Obesity the efforts of which have resulted in recommendations, that have changed policies in North Carolina affecting activity, and nutrition in public schools.

He received his medical degree from the University of Louisville and served a rotating internship in medicine and surgery at the Wilford Hall USAF Hospital in San Antonio, Texas. He is a veteran of the United States Air Force having served as a flight surgeon in Southeast Asia, during the Vietnam War, and in Texas and New Hampshire. He was awarded the Air Force Commendation medal for meritorious service.

Pediatric residency training was completed at Charlotte Memorial Hospital (now Carolinas Medical Center) and his training in Child Development was done at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

He has held teaching positions in academic medicine with the rank of Associate Clinical Professor of

Pediatrics and Family Medicine, at Carolinas Medical Center, the University of North Carolina and the Mountain Area Health Education Center.

He has written extensively on issues related to children's health and children with special health care needs. He has written one book, *The Window of Childhood: Glimpses of Wonder and Courage*, and co-authored a chapter on evaluation of learning problems in school age children, published in *Developmental Pediatrics*, edited by Mel Levine. He is a frequent contributor to newspapers and journals on the social and political concerns that affect children's health. He serves as a member of the editorial board of the *North Carolina Medical Journal*.

Honors received include being named one of the 100 most influential citizens of western North Carolina in the 20th century, by *The Asheville Citizen-Times*, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Asheville-Buncombe Community Relations Council, the David Tayloe Senior award from the North Carolina Pediatric Society for outstanding community service, the N.C. Dental Society Special Recognition award for improving dental health services to North Carolina's low income children, The Leslie Anderson Leadership Award, the American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter President achievement award and the American Academy of Pediatrics Special Recognition Award for increasing access to dental health care for children.

He received the Lewis Hine Award from the National Child Labor Committee in 2007 for his work to improve health care for low income children.

In 2007, he was named to the Order of the Long Leaf Pine by the governor of North Carolina.

He served as a member of the National Nominating Committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and currently chairs the Committee on Federal Government Affairs of the Academy. He has served on a number of task forces of the North Carolina Institute of Medicine, including "A Comprehensive Health Plan for North Carolina's Children, Latino Health, Access to Dental Health Care and Health Choice, North Carolina's S-CHIP program." He has been named to the newly formed study group on "Preventive Health Measures" by the North Carolina Institute of Medicine.

He, and his wife of 45 years, Marylyn, live in Black Mountain, North Carolina. They have three sons, two granddaughters and two grandsons. He is a member of the Presbyterian Church of the USA and is an ordained elder.

He is an avid runner and a student of American history. He enjoys gardening and mystery novels.

