

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

PERSON

Gunter-Smith, Pamel G., 1951-

**Alternative Names:** Gunter-Smith, Pamel Gunter, 1951-;

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

**Place of Birth:** Nashville, Tennessee

**Residence:**

**Occupations:** Research Manager

## 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 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 Porter Professor of Physiology and chair of the biology department at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. During her tenure, she served as the associate

provost for science and mathematics, directed Spelman's Howard Hughes Medical Institute Biomedical Program and the Center for Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 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 Drew's strategic plan, strengthening enrollments and retention, and developing new graduate programs. Gunter-Smith has written numerous peer-reviewed articles on the subject of intestinal physiology and served a number of panels for the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. She also served on the Board of Directors of the William Townsend Porter Foundation and the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS).

For her efforts and research at the AFRRI, Gunter-Smith was appointed the US representative to the NATO working group on radiation-induced gastrointestinal injury and 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**

**Jordan, Alice** [GRANDCHILD OF]  
**Paternal Grandmother**

**Gunter, William** [GRANDCHILD OF]  
**Paternal Grandfather**

**Kennedy, Calude** [GRANDCHILD OF]  
**Maternal Grandfather**

**Hamilton, Lucille** [GRANDCHILD OF]  
**Maternal Grandmother**

**Gore, Marcus** [CHILD OF]  
**Father**

**Kennedy, Pearl** [CHILD OF]

**Mother**

**Smith, Lealand** [PARENTOF]

**Son**

**Smith, Philip** [PARENTOF]

**Son**

**St. Vincent School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to 1965-05]

**St Bernard Academy** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to 1969-05]

**Spelman College** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to 1973-05]

**B.S.**

**Emory University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to 1978-08]

**Ph.D.**

**University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to 1979]

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

[from ? to 1981]

**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 2006 to ?]

**Provost and Academic Vice President**

**The American Physiological Society** [MEMBEROF]

**Co-Chair, Porter Development Committee**

**AP Biology Redesign Commission** [MEMBEROF]

**Member**

**The Center for Allaying Health Disparities Through Research & Education** [MEMBEROF]

**Chair, Project Advisory Committee**

**The William Townsend Porter Foundation** [MEMBEROF]

**Member, Board of Directors**

**Higher Education Resources Services (HERS)** [MEMBEROF]

**Meber, Board of Directors**