

**Wanda K. Jones, DrPH**, is Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Women's Health) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Director of the Office on Women's Health (OWH). Since her selection in February 1998, Dr. Jones has focused her efforts on eliminating health disparities for women through a variety of programs and initiatives. Dr. Jones actively participates in the Department's efforts concerning violence against women, disabilities, HIV/AIDS, mental health systems transformation, and global health. Dr. Jones has long been recognized for her leadership in the federal and state public health communities.

Prior to her current position, Dr. Jones was the Associate Director for Women's Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. From 1990 to 1994, she served as CDC's Assistant Director for Science in the Office of the Associate Director for HIV/AIDS, where she was active in policy issues related to HIV laboratory testing, women and AIDS, HIV vaccine development, and health care workers. Dr. Jones joined CDC in 1987 as an HIV laboratory trainer. A Penn State graduate in medical technology, she has worked in an inner-city blood bank and its hematology laboratory; in a small-town hospital as its night-shift technologist and then as its microbiologist; and for a State public health laboratory as a laboratory improvement consultant. She obtained her doctorate in Public Health Laboratory Practice from the University of North Carolina.

*I grew up in a small town in southeastern Pennsylvania, and graduated from Penn State with a bachelor's in medical technology. I worked for about 5 years in clinical labs in an inner city hospital and in a small town/rural hospital, then moved to a state public health lab. During nearly 5 years there, I provided laboratory training and assessment across the state's 100 county health departments, as well as teaching laboratory diagnostic techniques to clinical laboratorians. I then went to grad school at the University of North Carolina, completing my DrPH in public health laboratory practice. My research area was the role of oncogenes in childhood leukemia, although I also worked with HIV-transfected cell cultures to develop my test methodology. It was the latter work that led to my first job at CDC, training and methods development focused on HIV laboratory testing; I worked with the teams developing and perfecting dried blood spot testing technologies, as well as early molecular diagnostic tools. I then took the job as assistant director for science in the office of HIV/AIDS policy, where I worked on policies related to health care workers, neonatal screening, women and HIV/AIDS, vaccine development, and HIV reporting. Dr. David Satcher asked me to set up the CDC Office of Women's Health, and I was subsequently hired for that position. I came to HHS in 1998, selected for my current position as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Women's Health) after a competitive national search.*

*Major events that affected my leadership style/skills:*

- *Early job out of college and med tech school, "supervising" evening and night shift blood bank staff. None of them were med techs or specialists, but they'd had years of experience and on-the-job training. I was very much command-control, that's the only role model I'd had, and of course I had the degree. One of the senior women pulled me aside in the ladies room and told me I'd get a lot more out of the staff if I backed off a bit, described the work to be done as a request, rather than an order. I paid more attention to my "asks" after that.*

- *High-pressure environment in HIV policy, then at CDC, I took the four-part American Management Association Management Course. In part 4, the focus was on leadership. The late-week speaker, Dr. Joe Mancusi, may be single-handedly responsible for my most significant change, as he told a story from his own life. (For his grandparent's 60th anniversary, he and his aunt went to the basement to retrieve the heirloom Italian lace grandma had stored in a trunk in the basement. It was rotted from disuse. His object lesson: "use your lace"—the gifts you're given are of no value if you store them away. I was crying uncontrollably as he told the story—I'd been there.) This was "permission" to abandon (finally) any attempt at command-and-control leadership, and to apply my more natural consultative, deliberative, analytic style to leadership and decision-making.*