

**Imogene Bunn** (1911-2002) was a civil rights activist who came to Charlottesville in 1944 with a diploma from St. Philip Hospital School in Richmond, Virginia, and a certificate in public health nursing from the Medical College of Virginia. In Charlottesville, Bunn worked to break down racial barriers, one at a time. In 1946, she became the first Black nurse in the area when she was hired by the Instructive Visiting Nurse Association (IVNA). In that capacity, she visited both Black and white patients in their homes. Later, when the IVNA merged with the Charlottesville/Albemarle Health Department, Bunn became the agency's nurse supervisor. She eventually earned a Bachelor of Science degree in public health nursing at the University of Michigan. In 1970, she was promoted to nursing director for the Thomas Jefferson Health District. A community leader and bridge builder, Bunn challenged segregation at UVA Hospital and elsewhere, and found ways for people to work together. She often worked quietly behind the scenes. "When I look back," she said, "I was very proud that I was involved in desegregating institutions like the University hospital, the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, Blue Ridge Hospital, and places like that."

**Sources:**

Maura Singleton, "An Agent of Change During Segregation," Object Lessons: Celebrating 30 Years Through 30 Collections. [READ](#)

Rev. Benjamin F. Bunn and Mrs. Imogene Bunn, *Bridge Builders, 2001-2016, Charlottesville, VA*, pp. 17-18. [READ](#)

Interview with Imogene Bunn, [Papers of the Reverend Benjamin Bunn, 1980-1990](#). Special Collections Department, UVA Library, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library