Editorial - Dr. Madeleine M. Leininger


Madeleine M. Leininger

Born: July 13, 1925
Sutton, Nebraska

Died: August 10, 2012
Omaha, Nebraska

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Dr. Madeleine Leininger, founder of the worldwide transcultural nursing movement, theorist, scholar, researcher, author, speaker, an international leader in nursing and health care died peacefully at her home in Omaha, Nebraska on the evening of August 10th, 2002 at the age of 87.

Many readers of the Online Journal of Cultural Competence in Nursing and Healthcare use Dr. Leininger’s Culture Care Theory, ethnonursing research method, and other scholarly works written by Dr. Leininger in their clinical practice, teaching, and research. I’ve had the privilege of knowing Dr. Leininger for more than 30 years as a mentor, colleague, and friend. As you know, Dr. Leininger spent 15 years of her academic career in Michigan where the OJCCNH has its office. Associate Editor Dr. Marilyn McFarland did her PhD studies at Wayne State University under Dr. Leininger’s mentorship, and prior to her passing, Dr. Leininger entrusted Dr. McFarland and Dr. Hiba Wehbe-Almah, both of whom are faculty members at the University of Michigan-Flint, with the next edition of two of her seminal works in the field of Transcultural Nursing, Transcultural Nursing: Concepts, Theories, Research, and Practices, and Culture Care Diversity and Universality: A Worldwide Nursing Theory.

The HRSA-funded Cultural Competence Project came about as a result of Dr. Leininger’s encouragement to a group of Transcultural Nursing Society leaders, including Dr. Marilyn McFarland, Dr. Hiba Wehbe-Almah, and me, to seek grant funding to advance transcultural nursing and promote culturally congruent and competent care using a transcultural nursing framework. In July 2008, UM-Flint (in partnership with Madonna University and the Transcultural Nursing Society) was awarded a $1 million grant, Developing Nurses’ Cultural Competence: Evidence-based and Best Practices that has enabled us to 1). provide conferences, workshops and webinars on cultural competence using Leininger’s Culture Care Theory as an organizing framework; and 2). integrate cultural competence into the undergraduate and graduate nursing curricula. Funding also enabled us to launch the Online Journal of Cultural Competence in Nursing and Healthcare (http://www.ojccnh.org). Dr. Leininger’s final publication, an article about her ongoing father protective care research, was published in the OJCCNH in April, 2011.

During Dr. Leininger’s distinguished career, she has received hundreds of honors and awards, including the American Academy of Nursing’s prestigious Living Legends Award. She was a larger-than-life, charismatic, influential leader in nursing and health care globally and nationally. She not only studied and wrote about care and caring, but she embodied it in her personal life. Her life’s work will live on through all of us who knew and admired her.

Margaret M. Andrews, PhD, RN, FAAN, CTN Editor