



IN MEMORIAM

Donna Lou Vredevoe
Professor of Nursing
UC Los Angeles
1938 – 2011

Professor Emerita of Nursing and former Vice Chancellor Donna Vredevoe touched the lives of many faculty, staff, and students. The daughter of a former professor in the Graduate School of Education, Donna received her baccalaureate degree in bacteriology and her doctoral degree in microbiology from UCLA. Her scientific contributions in the field of immunology and tissue transplantation included seminal papers with Dr. Paul Terasaki on tissue typing that became foundational for the field of organ transplantation. Her early studies on viral carcinogenesis, before the recognition of the relationship between viruses and cancer were known, and before HIV/ AIDS, were also important to our understanding of the role of retroviruses on disease. Her later work on the impact of chemical pollutants provided important information about immunologic effects and the environment and the relationship of heart disease to immune dysfunction. Her work was published in the prestigious journals *Nature* and *Science*.

In 1967, Donna was appointed to the faculty of the School's first dean, Lulu Wolf Hassenplug, as the first basic science faculty member. In an early model of interdisciplinary collaboration, Donna collaborated with nursing faculty in providing the critical basic science background for the nursing curriculum. In one of many examples of interdisciplinary collaboration, Donna was a Principal Investigator on a federal grant to fund one of the first oncology nursing graduate programs in the United States. And, she was a senior editor of one of the first modern text books in oncology nursing which won an American Journal of Nursing book of the year award in 1981.

As a funded researcher, she provided mentorship in research methodology and grant writing to both students and young faculty in the development of their research programs. Because of her contributions to nursing science, she was inducted as an honorary member of the national nursing honor society, Sigma Theta Tau.

Donna was a much respected and valued teacher. "Evidence-based practice" has now become an accepted part of the lexicon to support interventions in clinical care. Long before that term was used, Donna was teaching those concepts in the core nursing research course for undergraduates and graduates. In addition to her course responsibilities, Donna was involved in approximately 100 Master's theses, 60 as chair (She was the chair of my thesis) and 14 doctoral dissertations, 7 as chair. She also had many pre and post doctoral students in her laboratory.

During her 40 year tenure, Donna provided outstanding service and leadership during many critical periods during the history of the School of Nursing. She stepped up twice as acting dean (1976-77, 1995-97). She was a catalyst for securing space for the School of Nursing within the Cancer Center. Until this time, the School of Nursing courses held courses in the borrowed classrooms in the Medical Center complex. She was the principal investigator responsible for bringing in approximately 10 million dollars in funding for what became

the Factor Building, which now houses the School of Nursing. For the first time, the School had its own space. When Donna was acting dean in the mid- nineties her leadership saw us through trying times again when our budget was cut by one third and when the very survival of the School was threatened. In part, because of Donna's leadership, the School survived and is now thriving.

Donna had an exemplary record of service through involvement in multiple Academic Senate activities and committees, including membership on the Council on Academic Personnel, and chair of the Senate (1999-2000). She increased the visibility of the School of Nursing and this networking and participation has continued. Steve Yeazell noted that she "was unflinching in her commitment to academic quality and integrity" and "embodied the very best in shared governance".

Donna also served as vice chancellor for academic personnel from 2001 until her retirement in 2006. And in her retirement, Donna was active in UCLA's Emeriti committee and delighted in participating in the life of her three grandsons. Donna's scholarship, fairness, wisdom, perseverance, optimism, compassion, leadership, and steadfast commitment to the School of Nursing were exemplary. Her contributions will be an enduring part of our legacy. She played a critical role in ensuring that the School remains a leader in nursing education and science, producing nursing researchers, educators, clinicians and administrators, who have and will continue to provide expert "evidence- based" and compassionate care for so many many people.

Linda Sarna