Dr. Mildred O. Hogstel, a pioneer in gerontological nursing, died April 18, 2011, in Fort Worth, Texas. Dr. Hogstel was a long-time contributor, Editorial Board member, and section editor for the *Journal of Gerontological Nursing*. She was an emeritus faculty member at Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Texas Christian University (TCU). She served on the faculty from 1959-1994, serving as Abell-Hanger Professor of Gerontological Nursing from 1988 until her retirement from the university. Unofficially, she never retired, continuing to teach, publish, and contribute to professional community activities.

Dr. Hogstel’s passion was improving the health of older adults. She was one of the first nurse educators to earn a national reputation in gerontological nursing with her landmark textbook, *Nursing Care of the Older Adult: In the Hospital, Nursing Home, and Community*, originally published in 1981 and recipient of the prestigious *American Journal of Nursing* (AJN) Book of the Year award in 1989. In 1984 and 1990, respectively, her books *Management of Personnel in Long-Term Care* (Hogstel, 1983) and *Geropsychiatric Nursing* (Hogstel, 1990) were also recognized as AJN Books of the Year. She authored more than 60 other books and scholarly articles and received numerous local and national awards for her contributions in gerontological nursing. These include:

- Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Gerontological Nursing Association (2002).
- Outstanding Volunteer Award from the city of Fort Worth, Texas (1999).
- Philanthropist of the Year Award, Tarrant Area Community of Churches (1997).
- Distinguished Alumni Award from Texas Lutheran College (1989).
- Great 100 Nurse Award for Dallas/Fort Worth, a recognition by the Texas Nurses Association (1992).
- Harriet Griffin Advocate of the Year Award, Mental Health Association of Tarrant County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (2003).

One of Dr. Hogstel’s proudest accomplishments was mentoring generations of students and faculty. Her passion for the health of older adults led to major curriculum changes. The nursing program at TCU became one of the first in the 1980s to offer a stand-alone course in gerontological nursing, which Dr. Hogstel developed and taught for several years. Her teaching expertise was recognized through various teaching awards at TCU and the T.A. Abbot Award for Faculty Excellence from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Division of Higher Education.

Dr. Hogstel was active in numerous organizations within the Fort Worth area, and as a certified ombudsman, advocated for the rights of patients in long-term care. She became a certified gerontological nurse in 1985.

Positive experiences with her parents, Gustav and Mabel Nelson Hogstel, led Dr. Hogstel to specialize in gerontological nursing. She became the primary caregiver for both her mother and father until their deaths.
Dr. Hogstel was proud of her Norwegian heritage. Her grandparents first came to the United States in the mid-19th century. The family name Hogstel means “a place high in the mountains where cattle go to graze” (M.O. Hogstel, personal communication, June 3, 2008).

Dr. Hogstel grew up in Clifton, Texas, a small agricultural community southwest of Fort Worth. She quickly adapted her Norwegian heritage to reveal a Texas flair. She was a cowgirl, having grown up on a ranch where she learned the art and skill of horsewomanship. In addition to its agricultural roots, Clifton was an academic center for cowboys and cowgirls of the region.

As a young woman, Dr. Hogstel earned her associate degree at what would become Texas Lutheran University in Clifton. Soon after, she earned her diploma at Providence School of Nursing in Waco, Texas, and her bachelor of science in nursing education from Baylor University. As a new graduate, she became an emergency department and surgical nurse. She earned her master’s degree at the University of Texas in Austin and her PhD from the University of North Texas in Denton. She also studied Norway’s health care system at the University of Oslo, when international nursing was considered a novelty.

Dr. Hogstel believed in the benefits of evidence-based practice before it became a buzzword in the health care professions. She generously funded research efforts of fledgling and seasoned researchers by endowing the Hogstel Gerontological Nursing Research Award through TCU’s Beta Alpha chapter of The Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau. She also funded many other small grants to support local research and service initiatives to benefit older adults, including the biennial Hogstel Gerontological Nursing Symposium. This symposium, which is regularly held at TCU, is now permanently endowed through her legacy.

REFERENCES

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