

Marian K. Shaughnessy Eulogy

29 February 2020

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There was this woman in my life ...beautiful, elegant, like a rose growing tall in the garden

There was this nurse in my life...passionate, intelligent, and strong;

There was this leader in my life...articulate, challenging, and inspirational;

There was this friend in my life...supportive, authentic, and caring.

Marian was all of these to me...and to many of you here today

I first met Marian in the 1980s when she was a graduate student in the master's program at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University. I was her dean.

In the subsequent several years I knew her as a community leader in the profession and as a loyal alum of the School of Nursing. Our paths crossed professionally and socially.

But our missions merged at a fateful dinner in 2011 when Marian and I talked at an annual Thanksgiving event hosted by the School of Nursing. Marian had joined the Board of University Hospitals Medical Center, and was interested in pursuing a doctorate.

As a board member of a medically dominated health care facility she knew a doctorate would open doors and break down barriers for her as a Trustee.

I convinced her to take one course in our doctoral program in nursing.

Marian joined my leadership class in January 2012 following that fateful dinner...

and she fell in love with learning about the vast leadership knowledge in nursing.

As many of you who are former students of mine know, the classic final assignment at the end of my leadership class is to write a letter to me, dated one year after the class ends, articulating how you have grown as a leader in the profession, and how you will be different as a leader in nursing,

For when you finish the doctorate you will be part of the 1% of nurses with doctorates, destined and compelled to lead.

Marian's letter was visionary ...

She described the 90% of leadership that is based on relationships. And she charted the course for a Leadership Academy that would become the premier training facility for preparing leaders in nursing, and empowering all nurses as leaders in care delivery, from the bedside to the boardroom. She believed that "now more than ever, nurses must seize the opportunity to not just be facilitators of health care but leaders in their own right...they will be the agents of change responsible for providing others with a lighted path for positive change..."

I recruited Marian to the board of the American Nurses Foundation because I knew she wanted to make a difference on the national and global level, And what better way than through serving as a Board member charting the future of nursing through the national organization representing 4 million US nurses.

As many of you will recall, throughout our many meetings, Marian regaled us with her nursing stories, most especially her early days as a travel nurse, from Alaska to Maine.

Through stories, we all understood the power of nurses, whether it is one nurse alone in Nome Alaska or 20 million nurses globally delivering 80% of the health care.

Marian's stories of her courage, often being the lone health care provider, inspired a current project we are undertaking with the American Nurses Association and the Foundation, *Narrative Nursing*.

We are encouraging nurses everywhere to share their strength in caring for others and their leadership at the bedside and every place where they provide care. Through this initiative we have inspired hundreds of nurses to acknowledge their power and value.

Marian's stories made it all real, they captured the spirit of nurses, saving lives, and helping people to live and die with dignity....and, of course, helping others to be healthier.

We all remember stories, and we will forever remember Marian's stories as a travel nurse.

Marian believed in health promotion, for herself, her friends and colleagues, and the community. She wanted us all to have access to quality health care. She fought relentlessly for expanding the role of advanced practice nurses in delivering much needed primary health care in rural and underserved areas.

Marian and Michael Shaughnessy created the Marian K. Shaughnessy Nurse Leadership Academy to fulfill Marian's dream.

In a very short time, through Marian's vision and relentless generation of important projects to instill leadership into everything that nurses learn and do, we have made great progress. We have launched key national initiatives and we have a vision that the Shaughnessy Leadership Academy will go global. Marian was always the inspiration.

On a personal level, Marian was my spiritual and professional sister.

Our bond was strong in so many ways, and from her I learned to live life to the fullest, to be thankful for each day, and to be present in the moment.

She touched my life as a leader, as a nurse, and as a beautiful and giving person. I will miss her daily texts, emails and phone calls. But most of all I will miss her being by my side at every meeting, generating new ideas and action plans so that together we could make the world a healthier place for everyone.

We will continue to teach nurses to embrace Marian's vision. Her dream will live on through the Shaughnessy Leadership Academy.

Mike Shaughnessy and his colleagues dubbed Marian and me the Mickey Mantle and Babe Ruth of nursing. If there are I-phones in heaven and if angels can text, I know that Marian will be sending me daily batting signals to carry out her legacy.