Cindy Smith Greenberg and her national award. Photo by Kelly Lacefield

Praise for Pediatric Nursing

Cindy Smith Greenberg Receives National Award for Excellence in Education

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By Mimi Ko Cruz

Children require careful explanations, especially when they are patients in hospitals, according to Cindy Smith Greenberg, chair and associate professor of nursing at Cal State Fullerton.

She gives that advice to her students as part of a lesson in pediatric nursing.

“If a child is going to surgery, don’t say, ‘you’re going to go to sleep and when you wake up, it will be all better,' " Greenberg, a longtime pediatric nurse, tells her students. “Often when they wake up, they may be in pain, and they may not want to go to sleep in the future. Instead, emphasize that they will be in a special sleep to fix their tummy, for example.”

Greenberg’s teachings have earned her the Society of Pediatric Nurses’ Excellence in Education Award.

The national honor recognizes a nurse who has made a significant contribution to pediatric nursing as an educator. Greenberg was chosen as this year's award recipient for "demonstrating development, implementation and evaluation of innovative teaching methods to educate target populations producing identifiable, positive outcomes."

The Lake Forest resident joined Cal State Fullerton's faculty in 1998 after earning her doctorate in nursing from the University of San Diego. She began her nursing career in 1976 as an assistant head nurse in a pediatric unit at a Chicago hospital. Since then, she's worked as a pediatric nurse and teacher at various hospitals and universities throughout the country.

Greenberg has co-written three pediatric nursing procedure manuals and made numerous nationwide presentations on the topic.

"As a pediatric nurse, you can make a difference in the lives of children and their families by helping children get better," Greenberg said. "And, if a child will die, then helping the family by making the experience as comforting as can be is very important."

Besides having a thorough understanding of the disease process and how to care for ill children, she said, "being caring is most important."

Roberta E. Rikli, dean of the College of Health and Human Development describes Greenberg as "an extraordinarily dedicated and caring person."

Greenberg "is a model pediatric nurse with superb teaching and mentoring skills and she is highly deserving of the prestigious Society of Pediatric Nurses award," Rikli said.

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