



Barbara Vinson O'Grady

July 6, 1928 - February 8, 2020

O'GRADY, Barbara V. Age 91 of Woodbury, formerly of Mpls. MN and Santa Ynez CA.

She is survived by her sons, Joseph O'Grady Jr M.D. and wife, Teryl Ryan O'Grady, of Waukesha, WI; Rev. Jeffrey V. O'Grady and wife, Lynn O'Grady, of San Marino CA; Kent N. O'Grady, and wife, Cindy O'Grady, of Woodbury MN; & daughters Kimberly O'Grady Simensen, and husband, John Simensen, of Minnetonka, MN; and Kathryn (Kit) O'Grady and husband Rick Kubitschek of Lake Elmo, MN; and step-daughter Tracy Prebish of and husband Leo Fleishman of Niskayuna, NY. Barb also leaves behind 15 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren with two more on the way.

Born July 6, 1928 in Alhambra CA, Barb graduated from Los Angeles County General Hospital School of Nursing and UCLA. Barb spent her life helping others as a public health nurse in California and Minnesota. When Barbara was a senior student nurse working at Los Angeles County General Hospital, she admitted a 13-month old child with a high fever who was severely dehydrated. Tragically, in spite of all of their efforts, the child died. As she was charting the infant's history she noticed the child has been admitted twice before with bacterial gastroenteritis - the condition that had caused the child's death. Barb told the doctor that it was a crime that the child's parents weren't instructed on how to prevent this type of gastroenteritis, which was mainly a

matter of the safe handling of food. The doctor informed her that there were public health nurses who went into homes to teach mothers how to avoid infection in their children. Barb decided right then that she would spend her career in public health nursing. Throughout her life, prevention of illness and disease has been her main focus. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Public Health Nursing from the University of California, Los Angeles. Some years later she went on to achieve a Masters of Science in Nursing from the University of Minnesota.

Barb's readiness to try new approaches in the delivery of healthcare services to vulnerable populations combined with her ability to convince policy makers to support improvements in the system allowed her star to shine brightly. Her ray of light has become a source of inspiration for others. She established the Barbara O'Grady Excellence in Public Health Lecture Fund in the School of Nursing at the University of Minnesota. This fund provides an annual award for excellence in practice, focusing on innovations in public health nursing. Barb has received numerous awards for her public service. These awards are too numerous to list here but among them are: The Innovative State and Local Government Initiatives Award given by The Ford Foundation and Harvard University, Distinguished Leadership Award bestowed by The National League for Nursing, and The Outstanding Achievement Award from the Board of Ramsey County Commissioners. One of her most recent awards was being recognized by the University of Minnesota School of Nursing's 100 Distinguished Alumni for her multifaceted nursing career including leadership of the Ramsey County Public Health Nursing Service.

Prior to her retirement Ms. O'Grady worked as the director of Ramsey County Public Health Nursing Service where she led highly qualified staff of 9 public health nurse clinicians and 53 public health nurses who all made a difference in their client's health. While at Ramsey County, she established care for the immigrant Hmong population and developed close working relationships with

public and private organizations to provide comprehensive, safe care for clients in the community. Barb also served on the Board of Governors of the University of Minnesota Hospitals and was an Ass't Professor of Nursing at Gustavus Adolphus College.

During her career, she was a frequent speaker at conferences, classes and seminars around the country on the challenges for nursing in the changing health care delivery system. She also consulted with many elected officials, both statewide and nationally, on public health issues.

While Barb had many professional accomplishments, her greatest achievement was in her family. She was extremely proud that her children were all involved in helping others and making the world a safer and more healthful place.

During her later years, Barb suffered from Alzheimer's disease but she never let it take away her smile. Her friends at Stonecrest Senior Living in Woodbury knew her as "Smiling Barb" where she always had a smile on her face and a kind word for others. This was a life well lived.

Memorial service to be held on Friday, February 21 at 2:00pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church at 1200 South Marquette Ave. in Minneapolis. Private interment.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests sending memorial contributions to the Barbara O'Grady Excellence in Public Health Lecture, University of Minnesota Foundation, PO Box 860266, Minneapolis, MN 55486-0266.

The family would like to thank the loving and caring staff at Presbyterian Homes-Stonecrest in Woodbury and Optage Hospice for the outstanding care

given to our mom these past few years.

Tribute Wall

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“ We have many happy memories of Barbwe first met her in 1997 when she married John ...we liked her immediately and grew to love her ...her kindness sense of humour and understandingwe miss her and always will ..RIP dear friend



The Jones family - February 21, 2020 at 04:44 AM

MA

“ To Kim and your family: Your mother was a great role model for many young women in healthcare. She also helped to establish the Women's Health Leadership Trust, which now numbers more than 500 members! I truly enjoyed working with her. She was a delightful woman. I am glad that we had that wonderful lunch at the Afton Inn a few years ago. I still have the photos. My deepest sympathies on the loss of your beloved mother. Maureen Acosta



Maureen Acosta - February 19, 2020 at 12:54 PM