

Patricia Clark Foster, Past President of the Association of Adventist Women passes away

Some believe that dying on your birthday is a special blessing. How much more to pass to rest on the celebrated birthday of Jesus Christ? The Association of Adventist Women is saddened by the passing of past president Patricia Clark Foster, who had been on hospice care, on Christmas, 2022.

Dr Foster graduated with a BS degree in 1955 from the College of Medical Evangelists (CME now Loma Linda University) and went on to complete a master's degree at Vanderbilt and a PhD from Claremont Graduate University. Pat was an excellent educator, who taught and was involved in administration as Academic Dean for many years at Loma Linda University School of Nursing before taking on the presidency of the AAW from 2001 to 2003.

Pat Foster was an outstanding president of the Association of Adventist Women surrounding its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As an exceptional educator she wanted AAW to have clear goals and measurable outcomes. She organized a committee to define the Association's audience, resources and rewrite our mission and goals, which are still in use today. However, she stated that, "we have learned we can never specify all the outcomes at the beginning, and we discovered that there are also worthwhile outcomes that can not be measured." Dr Foster helped develop the Champion of Justice Award that recognizes men who have made significant commitment to support women in Adventist ministry. She was also the only president to use footnotes to academic sources in her communiques!

Jeanne Murdoch relished working with her on AAW committees so she could observe her organizational abilities close up. She said Pat Foster appreciated contributions and valued those that could help make project details happen. "She was very affirming."

Dr. Foster was also a deserving recipient of the Woman of the Year award for her distinguished career in Nursing education. She was also a part time faculty at La Sierra School of Education where she coordinated their distinguished Educators Lecture Series. Her field of interest and research was critical thinking in professional students. Dr Marilyn Herrmann, Emeritus Dean of LLU School of Nursing remembers her strong support for faculty involvement in research and obtaining advanced degrees.

Dr. Pat Foster's leadership is part of the reason I expect to see competent women leading in church. As a teen, I saw her lead as an elder, Adult Sabbath School Superintendent and church board member at Loma Lind University Church. She was also president of the National Axillary for Loma Linda University School of Medicine Alumni Association.

As well as her relentless pursuit of excellence, Pat was famous for her warm interpersonal skills. She knew how to read a room. In 2000 saying, "As we face the 21<sup>st</sup> century an increasingly diverse community and church have become more fragmented... Making connections means creating a sense of community and collaboration while respecting differences in others."

Those who worked with Pat Foster observed her mutual partnership with her husband Glenn and his willingness to support her leadership. Their mutually respectful marriage was admired by many. Join us in lifting up Glenn and their 6 children in prayer. May we all strive to create the collaborative, mentoring community that supports strong women and men in every level of the church that she envisioned and modeled.

Nerida Taylor Bates current president of the Association of Adventist Women