

Spotlight

Paula Sherwood receives Investigator with a Brilliant Future Award

Paula R. Sherwood, PhD RN CNRN, was presented with the Investigator with a Brilliant Future Award at the 2008 National State of the Science Congress on Nursing Research, held in Washington, D.C., October 2–4. The American Academy of Nursing (AAN) and the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science recognize the contributions of scientists early in their research careers who show extraordinary potential to develop sustained programs of research, certain to have significant impact on the science and practice of nursing and healthcare, with this distinction. Recipients are Council members, nominated by other Council members.

The criteria for the award included the following:

- building research productivity (within the last 5 years) in an area of major significance to nursing and healthcare knowledge
- research dissemination and translation with growing impact on nursing and other discipline science
- emerging leadership related to nursing science advancement
- council member in good standing and be within 7 years following receipt of a doctorate.

Upon graduating from James Madison University in Virginia, Sherwood took a staff nurse position on a neuroscience unit in Honolulu, HI, and it was there that her love for neuroscience began. She has worked in many roles—as a staff nurse, supervisor, educator, clinical nurse specialist (CNS), and finally researcher—yet she has always remained true to her patient population of choice—persons with neurological disorders. She received her master’s degree from the University of Iowa, and in her subsequent role as a CNS in Flint, MI, Sherwood found herself drawn to neuro-oncology. Her relationship with a young man who passed away as a result of a Glioblastoma Multiforme and his family spawned her dissertation research to identify predictors of distress for family caregivers of persons with a primary malignant brain tumor.

Obtaining her PhD from Michigan State University, she has used her clinical and research experience to begin to build her trajectory of research in neuro-oncology. Dr. Sherwood has received two large grants from the National Institutes of Health to conduct research in neuro-oncology, and her current work is a National Cancer Institute funded study to examine biobehavioral markers of stress in neuro-oncology family caregivers. Based on this and several other small grants she has received, Sherwood has published more than 35 articles and 9 book chapters in the area of neuro-oncology and family caregiving. Remaining true to her love of neuroscience, Sherwood has remained an active member of AANN since 1994 and has held the CNRN credential since 1995. She has been a board member of local AANN chapters, a member of a national AANN committee, and has served as a board member on ABNN. She also serves as a grant reviewer for NNF.

AANN congratulates Sherwood on her many successes throughout her career and for receiving the 2008 the Investigator with a Brilliant Future Award!