Obituary: APJON’s Founding Editor Professor Judith (Judi) Johnson Passed Away on April 21, 2024

With profound sadness, we announce the passing of Professor Judith (Judi) Johnson, the esteemed founding editor of the Asia-Pacific Journal of Oncology Nursing (APJON), on April 21, 2024. On behalf of the entire editorial board, we extend our heartfelt condolences to her husband Randy, her family, and all who knew her.

Professor Johnson was a luminary in the field of nursing and oncology education. She held a diploma in nursing from Augustana Hospital in Chicago, Illinois, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Rochester, a Master’s degree in Public Health Nursing, and a Doctorate in Adult Education from the University of Minnesota. She also earned a Certificate in Chemical Counseling from the University of Minnesota and a Certificate in Oncology Nursing from the Royal Marsden Hospital in London, England.

Since 1980, Professor Johnson served as a nurse at North Memorial Medical Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1992, she founded HealthQuest, an organization committed to empowering patients with challenging illnesses such as cancer and stroke, focusing on the adaptation process, self-empowerment, and well-informed healthcare decision-making.

Her pioneering PhD thesis was adopted by the American Cancer Society in 1980 as the "I Can Cope" education course, which has since been implemented globally. She launched a PhD program at Hokkaido University of Health Sciences in Sapporo, Japan, where she also served on the faculty from 1999 to 2004. From 1983 to 1987, she was President of the Oncology Nursing Society and served on the board of the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care in 1998 and 1999.
Professor Johnson’s scholarly contributions include more than 125 articles, book chapters, and audiovisual productions, and she co-authored five books. She was awarded over 20 grants for patient education research and recognized as a Fulbright scholar. Her work led to significant educational initiatives at Tianjin Medical University Cancer Institute and Hospital in China and Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya. She received numerous Distinguished Service Awards from respected organizations including the Oncology Nursing Society, the American Cancer Society, and the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care, along with the University of Minnesota’s Outstanding Achievement Awards in 1994 and 2018.

As a key consultant in establishing the Asian Oncology Nursing Society, Professor Johnson founded APJON and served as its Editor-in-Chief from 2014 to 2019. During the initial stages of APJON, we faced numerous challenges. It was thanks to Judi’s relentless dedication and her extensive network in oncology nursing that we were able to overcome these difficulties and steadily develop. Her exceptional leadership has had a profound impact on our journal.

To honor her outstanding contributions, I am pleased to announce the establishment of “The Judi Johnson Award for Outstanding Research” at APJON. This award will be presented annually to recognize the most innovative and influential paper published in APJON during the previous year. I believe Judi would be proud of this as well.

A leader in oncology nursing, Judith (Judi) Johnson, rest in peace. We will miss you forever.

Warm regards,

Winnie KW SO, PhD, RN, FAAN

Editor-in-Chief

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