



For immediate release — April 14, 2016

## Nursing educator honoured for her contribution to the field

Dr. Jean Harrowing (BASC '78) is one of 100 nurses to receive a Centennial Award from the College of Registered Nurses of Alberta as the organization celebrates its 100th year.

“I was quite surprised — it means a lot that my colleagues would even think to nominate me,” says Harrowing. “Nursing has been a fabulous career.”



Harrowing, an associate professor in the University of Lethbridge’s nursing program, has a wealth of experience in nursing and nursing education, and her work in Africa has inspired registered nurses around the world. Since 2008, she has offered the Malawi Field Study to give students from any discipline the opportunity to conduct culturally relevant health promotion about malaria, tuberculosis and HIV-AIDS. Thanks to her connection to Kampala, Uganda, a number of

nursing students have completed their final preceptorship in a Ugandan hospital.

Harrowing’s research in Africa and the Caribbean brought registered nurses to the policy table by getting them involved in HIV research and expanding their capacity to provide care to people who live with HIV. She has contributed to registered nursing education in Alberta by serving on the Nursing Education Program Approval Board (NEPAB) for 10 consecutive years.

After 34 years, Harrowing says she has no regrets about choosing nursing as a career. She was drawn to the field out of a desire to learn more about maintaining and promoting health and to work with people at vulnerable and important times in their lives. Often, the human experience around health, whether it’s a transition like having a baby or a trauma like being diagnosed with a serious illness, is a significant life-altering event.

“They’re all pretty special moments and, to me, it’s an honour to work with people as they go through those life experiences which are very intimate and personal,” she says.

Over the years and with increased education, Harrowing has seen the opportunities expand for nurses to participate and engage in making positive changes in the way people access health care and the health-care system.

“I was one of 100 nurses who were singled out and honoured but there’s so much work that goes on every day that the public doesn’t know about. This award is not just mine; it’s for all of my colleagues.”

Another southern Albertan, Janet Lapins, also received a Centennial Award. Lapins played a key role in establishing the Chinook Primary Care Network and served as director of Chinook’s health information and outcomes department. She also helped establish the Pincher Creek primary care project and the chronic disease network. Lapins has now returned to the bedside, teaching and mentoring nursing students at Lethbridge College.

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