

In Memorium: Sister Jeanne Marie Meurer

Maryanne F. Laffin, RN, FNP, CNM, LM, MS, FACNM

The National Perinatal Association (NPA) is an interdisciplinary organization that strives to be a leading voice for perinatal care in the United States. Our diverse membership is comprised of healthcare providers, parents & caregivers, educators, and service providers, all driven by their desire to give voice to and support babies and families at risk across the country.

Members of the NPA write a regular peer-reviewed column in *Neonatology Today*.



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We are sad to share the passing of Sister Jeanne Marie Meurer, who was born in 1930 in Minnesota and died recently at the age of 90.

Sister Jeanne, as she was known, was a leader in perinatal health care. She helped establish nurse-midwifery as a profes-



Sister Jean Meurer
CNM, Missouri

sion and initiated the graduate program of nurse-midwifery at Saint Louis University in the 1970s.

She earned her bachelor's (1955) and her

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master's in nursing service administration (1962), both through Saint Louis University; and her masters in maternity nursing with a certificate in midwifery through Columbia University, New York (1970). She was certified in nurse-midwifery through

the American College of Nurse Midwives (1971) and became a fellow (FACNM) in 1994. She earned a master's in pastoral studies through the Aquinas Institute of Theology (1998).

Her long career included working as head nurse of St. Mary's Health Center's Labor and Delivery and Nursery and as a pediatric supervisor at the Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center. She supervised obstetrics and taught in the School of Nursing, both at St. Mary's Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin.

Sister Jeanne was a trailblazer in Missouri. She taught at Saint Louis University (1970-82) and was the first nurse-midwife to practice in Missouri. She opened the first nurse-midwifery service in the state of Missouri (1971-82). In 1972 Sister Jeanne began the graduate program of nurse-midwifery at Saint Louis University.

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In 1982, she began Ruskin Migrant and Community Health Service, a federally funded nurse-midwifery program for migrants, Florida. In 1998 she co-founded Woman's Place, a safe drop-in haven for women suffering from domestic abuse, co-directing until 2006. She served on the St. Louis County Domestic and Family Vio-

lence Council. She was intensely involved in the community and political affairs, especially environmental, migrant, and ecological concerns. In 2014 she received the “Legend in Nursing” Award from the March of Dimes.

Sister Jeanne was a Fellow of the American College of Nurse-Midwives, as well as a Vice-President. In 2002 she was the recipient of ACNM’s prestigious Hattie Hemschemeyer Award.

Sister Jeanne was an Emeritus President of the National Perinatal Association and worked tirelessly in promoting perinatal care to families.

Disclosure: The National Perinatal Association www.nationalperinatal.org is a 501c3 organization that provides education and advocacy around issues affecting the health of mothers, babies, and families.

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