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Beauvais Honored by the Connecticut Nurses Association

Audrey M. Beauvais, Sacred Heart University

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Calling nursing a vocation that requires only a healing heart, mind and touch, Audrey Beauvais, SHU assistant professor and director of the undergraduate nursing program, was bestowed with the prestigious Josephine A. Dolan Diamond Jubilee Award for her contributions to nursing education. The Fairfield native was given the award by the Connecticut Nurses Association at their annual convention in Cromwell on October 23.

The Josephine A. Dolan Award for Outstanding Contributions to Nursing Education recognizes innovations and achievements in areas of improving the quality of the educational experience, enhancing the learning environment and conceiving new analytical approaches. Beauvais’ 23-year nursing career spans academia, the insurance industry and, as a practicing nurse, she has held executive-level positions at several health-care facilities including Stamford Hospital. Since 2006, she has worked at Sacred Heart University where she has been a visionary professor and nurse educator and a stalwart champion and mentor for students.

Throughout the years, Beauvais has been the recipient of numerous awards and professional citations, including the 2013 Connecticut League for Nursing’s Ruth M. Olson Excellence in Nurse Education Award for her success as an educator and for her leadership skills.

“Audrey is an excellent nurse educator. Her commitment to academic excellence is unwavering,” said Susan DeNisco, associate professor and interim director of Sacred Heart’s School of Nursing. DeNisco, who nominated Beauvais for the award, added, “as an assistant professor in the school of nursing, she has had teaching responsibilities in the baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral programs. While teaching across programs is challenging, she does it effectively and without complaint.”

DeNisco also underscored Beauvais’ unwavering commitment to her students. “She successfully passed the national certification examination as a clinical nurse leader so that she could...
understand the skill set she was expecting of her master’s students; this is another sign of her solid commitment to the nursing profession and academic excellence.”

Beauvais, a natural teacher whose passion for helping students is always evident, calls Sacred Heart home as it the institution where she earned two degrees—a master’s in business administration in 1995 and a master’s in nursing in 1994. She also holds a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Fairfield University and a doctorate of practical nursing practice from Ohio’s Case Western Reserve University.

"Sacred Heart has a commitment to producing well-rounded, caring and professional nurses,” said Beauvais. “I feel honored to receive this award because it validates what I do as a professional, and it is something that I will hold very dear as I continue to move forward in my career. It’s an honor to be recognized by your nursing peers.”

While maintaining an academic rigorous and challenging program is vital to the success of students, Beauvais said Sacred Heart’s commitment to social justice and its foundation in the Catholic intellectual traditions is pivotal to nursing students because many of them take part in the school’s regular medical mission trips to Guatemala and Jamaica. The trips provide medical services to those in need while giving hands-on clinical experience to students. “That immersion experience transforms students, and it allows them to become better nurses. It gives them a real purpose and meaning,” noted Beauvais.

Beauvais has set the gold standard as a nurse educator among her colleagues and students and has been instrumental to the strong reputation of Sacred Heart University’s nursing program. “Audrey’s expertise, along with the compassion and empathy she exhibits as a nurse educator, makes her an outstanding role model for our students and well regarded among her peers,” said Patricia Walker, dean of Sacred Heart’s College of Health Professions.

“The high level of engagement between our faculty and students in the classroom and during service missions results in a unique experience that contributes to our students’ success in the clinical setting and makes them highly regarded among potential employers,” added Walker.