Legendary Leader: Mary Frances Oneha

Carol O'Meara, MS, RN, CNF Secretary

HONORING A *Legacy* OF LEADERSHIP

The Pacific Islander community represents a vibrant and diverse cultural heritage, and within this community, nurses have long played an essential role in health care. Pacific Islander Nurses have not only provided exceptional nursing care but have also fought for representation, cultural competency, and the recognition of the unique healthcare needs of Pacific Islander populations. In this article, we celebrate the contributions of a notable Pacific Islander nurse who has made a significant impact on the care of the Pacific Islander population.

Mary Frances Oneha, PhD, RN, APRN, is the Chief Executive Officer at Waimanalo Health Center in Oahu, Hawaii. Dr. Oneha received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Hawaii, Master of Nursing from the University of Washington, and PhD in Nursing from the University of Colorado.

Dr. Oneha is committed to improving the health of Native Hawaiians through the integration of Native Hawaiian values and practice in healthcare practice and research. She advocates for healthcare policy and payment to focus on addressing the social, economic, and environmental factors that influence health. Her research interests have focused on understanding cultural perceptions regarding intimate partner violence, implementing a perinatal risk reduction intervention with Native Hawaiian women, working to prove the value of enabling services, and building the infrastructure at health centers to conduct community-based research in partnership with academic institutions and other community health centers.

Dr. Oneha was inducted into the University of Hawaii School of Nursing Hall of Fame, honored as a Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu Na Wahine Puuwai Aloha, and recognized by the White House as an AAPI Woman Champion of Change. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing.

Through her work in research, policy, public health, and patient care, Dr. Oneha is not only improving the lives of individuals but also creating a more inclusive and culturally competent healthcare system. The legacy of this outstanding Pacific Islander nurse will continue to inspire future generations to lead with compassion and a commitment to equality. ■