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Melinda, with her mother Eunice



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Eunice Brock— *Honoring a beloved daughter through a scholarship gift*

Melinda's life was grounded in honesty, integrity and love. So recalls Eunice Brock, Melinda's mother and the person who established in her memory The Melinda Kellner Brock Maternal and Child Health Scholarship at the Gillings School of Global Public Health.

The endowed scholarship will assist a public health student who demonstrates a passion for maternal and child health.

"Destined to be a nurse," as one colleague observed, Melinda began her career in the mother-baby unit at WakeMed Hospitals in Raleigh, N.C., and then worked for 15 years in family planning at the Durham County (N.C.) health department. Her too-early death in March 2010 left her family and friends grief-stricken and the world deprived of a talented and compassionate caregiver.

In remembering Melinda, her former WakeMed supervisor recalls that their nursing unit included people from both ends of the socio-economic spectrum. "Melinda's passion was to be assigned to those less fortunate," says Sarah Caviness, RN. "She easily established rapport with the patient and all the family members [and] especially enjoyed the time she spent with new mothers. Her personality—and her mature understanding of grief—made her a [great support] for women who had lost their infants."

Her openness also extended to colleagues, Caviness says, and they often benefited from Melinda's understanding and support.

"Melinda was a natural at the health department," says former co-worker Robin Godwin, RN. "As a public health nurse, she quickly realized she would also serve as a social worker. Our clients need so much that it's hard to try to meet their needs. But that was never a problem for Melinda. She found services for her patients and often would follow up to see their progress."

Like the clients in Durham County, Godwin says she is a better person for having known Melinda Brock.

"Melinda was an extraordinary public health nurse," her mother says, "and it seems fitting to establish a scholarship in her memory both at the UNC School of Nursing and at the Gillings School of Global Public Health. Who knows? Perhaps one day, a talented nurse-in-training will be awarded both."

Eunice Brock says she hopes that the scholarship's recipients "will live lives dedicated, as Melinda's was, to people in need – and that they will give to others in a spirit of kindness and compassion."

In the early 1980s, Eunice Brock, always ahead of her time, was the first woman in Chapel Hill to own her own real estate agency. Later, hers was the first residential real estate agency in the U.S. to have its own website. In 2011, she was designated a "Town Treasure" by the Chapel Hill (N.C.) Historical Society.

—Linda Kastleman

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