

January 2, 2025

Dear Colleagues of the International Family Nursing Awards Committee,

I am delighted to nominate Susan Sullivan- Bolyai PhD, RN, FAAN for the IFNA Excellence in Family Nursing Award. As a seasoned nursing professional, Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai has demonstrated exceptional career efforts to advance family nursing through her many contributions. I have worked with Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai over the past eight years as a member of the Resource Advancement Committee of IFNA and then as a co-chair with me of the committee. It is based on these experiences that I am able to provide the following support for her nomination for this award.

Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai has been a dedicated family nurse since the inception of her practice. She assumed a variety of pediatric practice positions inclusive of leadership roles during the beginning and middle years of her nursing career. Solidifying her passion for pediatric nursing, she obtained a master's in nursing from Emory University with a focus on children and families as a Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS). This was followed by a post Master's certificate focused on chronic conditions and families from the University of Washington. Her work as a CNS at Children's Hospital, Seattle, Washington with children who experience birth defects contributed to her decision to pursue a Doctor of Nursing Science (DNSc) degree and a post-doctoral fellowship at Yale University School of Nursing.

Concentrating on Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) family management experience and the need for peer support, she launched her initial research beginning with a new phenomenon exploration of what it was like to manage a young child (<5 y.o.) diagnosed with T1D from the family management context. The mixed methods study revealed that mothers reported tremendous fear and anxiety during the initial postdiagnosis period and with little time to become competent in learning their child's care. They reported being alone, isolated and incompetent with the care they were providing. The 'work' was significant and many times invisible with little appreciation by health care providers as to the extent of time and energy it takes to manage the chronic condition. The description of "Constant vigilance" was a commonly described caregiving behavior used by mothers in the study to help manage their children's day-to-day illness-related care. The dissertation funding for this effort was through an F31 Dissertation training grant from NINR (1996-1999). Her dissertation was entitled "Mothers' experiences raising young child with T1D". Seven publications in referred journals resulted from her dissertation work.

This dissertation work led to 1). Exploring fathers' experiences with managing young children with T1D, and 2). Development and testing parent-to-parent mentor support and education intervention (feasibility) HOMEWARD and (fully powered) STEP with numerous publications; as well as an adapted version for Latino families. She then pilot tested teen educator mentors supporting preteen youth with T1D along with parent education peer mentoring as a family-focused intervention.

Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai continued to secure grant funding beyond the F31. Additional NINR funding included an F32, R15, and RO1 between 1996 thru 2015, all related to family

management interventional studies. Her publications of the findings from the funded studies were in a variety of peer reviewed journals. She published seven articles as first author from these studies as well as many other articles in which she was not first author but one of several authors.

Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai has been a recipient of several awards during her career, a few of which include the Dean's Award: 2022 Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing, UMMS, Marcelette Williams UMMS Research Scholarship Award 2018-Present (for 5 years), Suzanne Feetham Nurse Scientist Family Research Award-Eastern Nursing Research Society, 2015, Dean's Award, University of Massachusetts, Worcester, 2007, Doctoral Faculty Award University of Massachusetts, Worcester: 2005, 2006, Eastern Nursing Research Society (ENRS) Distinguished Contribution to Nursing Research Award-Junior Investigator, 2005 and Maternal Child Nursing Research Paper of the Year Award 2003, Awarded by Editorial Board. She also was inducted into the American Academy of Nursing in 2013.

Also noteworthy is Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai's work with curriculum, teaching and advising. At New York University, Rory Meyers College of Nursing, she was Director of the Florence S. Downs PhD Program of Nursing Research and Theory Development in which she collaborated with faculty to educate, mentor and support PhD students to successfully achieve the development and dissemination of an original nursing focused research study; led subcommittee work on adapting curriculum to meet the contemporary needs of nurse scientists. Additionally, she was the framer of FIRE (Forum on Inter-Collegiate Regional Events for Nursing PhD students and faculty) group in the TriState area which she led for four summers. She developed and facilitated the Dean's PhD Nurse Scientist Forum bringing in key nurse scientist leaders in research and health policy for presentation and one-to-one networking with PhD students. At the University of Massachusetts, Worcester, she was a key architect in the development and coordination of an independent PhD program at University of Massachusetts, Worcester (previously a combined University of Massachusetts, Amherst-Worcester PhD program), she designed and monitored content in core courses: Qualitative Methods, Advanced Qualitative Methods, State of the Science, Grant Proposal Writing, Intervention Development, Nursing Theory, and Interventions and Family Measurement. She was also a PhD Committee Chair and Cochair for over 50 PhD students in her career, several which focused on family nursing.

Finally, Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai has written book chapters, given presentations related to her research in family nursing, has been active in service to her colleges, universities, and community and has been an active member/leader in professional national and international organizations over her career trajectory. She has been a member of IFNA since 2017 and an active member of RAC. Her curiosity, integrity, knowledge generation, thoughtfulness, creativity and commitment to family nursing over the years make Dr. Susan Sullivan-Boylai an outstanding candidate for the Excellence in Family Nursing award. In my judgement, she indeed would be a worthy recipient.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions,
Warm regards,



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