Artwork Commissioned in Honor of Dr. Helen Erickson and The Theory of Modeling Role Modeling

For 100 years, University Health System has served a vital role in San Antonio and throughout Bexar County — providing outstanding care to those who need it, training the next generation of health professionals, and working to find new and better treatments through research. Over the course of that history, we have followed a core set of values that guides and defines us.

The Nursing Professional Practice Model reflects the mission of the Health System to provide high quality, compassionate care to our community. In January 2003, the theory of Modeling/Role Modeling (MRM) by Helen Erickson, PhD, RN was adopted to guide our nursing practice. Using MRM, nurses aspire to accept and respect an individuals’ unique view of themselves and their world as described by Dr. Erickson. Sixteen years and two ANCC Magnet designations later, MRM continues to guide nursing practice and care delivery throughout University Health System and the community it serves.

In preparation for University Health System’s 3rd Magnet designation, Dr. Erickson was invited to meet with nursing staff in December 2018 to explore how MRM has impacted the delivery of healthcare both within our Health System and throughout the community. During unit tours with Dr. Erickson, nurses shared examples of how MRM shaped their academic development and defined their delivery of care.

A painting was commissioned in honor of Dr. Helen Erickson. Edwin Calderon, a talented artist, Health System employee, and nursing student was asked to create a painting representing MRM, the history of University Health System, and its role in the health of the community. Mr. Calderon describes his interpretation as a direct representation of how hospitals/communities can collaborate together to create a synergistic effect of health and prosperity. Just as human beings are holistic with mind, body, and spirit, so are paintings. Every brush stroke radiates a different colored personality and belief. Once blended together only then can we appreciate its holistic nature.

The painting includes San Antonio landmarks to represent the community that University Health System serves. Among these are landmarks that represent the vital role and history of the Health System including the historical Robert B. Green hospital from 1917, the original Bexar County Hospital of 1968, and the recently constructed Sky Tower of 2014. These Health System landmarks illustrate our commitment to transform healthcare and serve the community. The artist’s approach to creating this painting was to subtly include the concepts within Dr. Helen Erickson’s theory throughout the landscape representing a nurse’s objective and subjective view of the client. The intent of the hidden words is to have the observer pause and interact with the painting much as a nurse must pause and interact with the client. Dr. Erickson’s open arms represent the “long arm” or influence of nursing while illustrating the Health System’s role in extending that nurturance to the community.

The painting was presented to Dr. Erickson on December 4, 2018 in San Antonio, Texas by the artist and Health System nursing staff during the Nursing Living Legends (Grand Rounds with Dr. Helen Erickson) luncheon sponsored by the University Health System Center for Clinical Excellence.