

Honorary Awards

Elizabeth Anne Mason AM

Chancellor, I have the honour of presenting to you Elizabeth Anne Mason AM, who council has determined should be awarded the honorary title Doctor of Letters.

Better known as “Janie Mason”, she completed general nursing training at Prince Henry’s Hospital Melbourne and midwifery nursing at Queen Victoria Hospital Melbourne, and infant health nursing at Tresillian Sydney. Her clinical nursing practice in acute care was in surgery, urology and haemodialysis.

Janie came to the Territory in 1964 with her husband Jon. Her first job at Batchelor Hospital was followed by midwifery at Darwin Hospital and five years on Gove Peninsula. Back in Darwin for Cyclone Tracy, she worked in community health before transferring to the Darwin Hospital School of Nursing. After teaching secondary school science and maths, she became the second nursing academic at Darwin Community College in the first nursing programs.

Janie enrolled in the first local degree program in 1976, gaining a Bachelor of Education, followed over the years with a Graduate Diploma of Science Education, Master of Science, and a Bachelor of Labour Studies.

She played an important leadership and pioneering role in the development of nursing studies at this University. She fought for conversion from diploma to degree for nursing programs. The first external nursing studies began in 1993. As Acting Head of School of Nursing and Associate Dean of Nursing, and with strong nursing staff support, the first fully external undergraduate nursing degree program in Australia commenced in 1997. Janie initiated the first VET nursing courses at this University.

For almost fifty years, Janie has played a significant role in University governance. She served on Council, the Academic Board and its Committees. As its Chair, she represented the University nationally. She undertook these roles variously as a student, academic or trade union representative.

Janie was active both locally and nationally in professional, industrial and heritage organisations, from the nursing college and the euthanasia society, to the heritage and museum sector and aged care. She is a donor over many years to activities in aged care, education and museums, including trade union scholarships for post-graduate nursing nationally, and for Indigenous undergraduate or VET nursing students at this University.

She retired in 2014 as a University Fellow and Nursing Museum Curator. With Museum volunteer support and grant funding, she has since published several books and articles.

Janie was a Fellow of the College of Nursing Australia and the first woman President of the Northern Territory Trades and Labor Council. She has been honoured for her service to nursing and the Northern Territory community by the National Tertiary Education Union, awarded a Centenary Medal, recognised in the Tribute to Northern Territory women and by Unions NT and appointed a Member of the Order of Australia.

Chancellor

In recognition of her distinguished service in senior University positions and her significant contribution to the field of nursing, Janie Mason AM is awarded the honorary title of Doctor of Letters.