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For Immediate Release

Governors State University faculty members receive Crossroads Coalition Pioneer Awards

University Park, Illinois, February 24, 2006 - On Thursday, February 23, Governors State University (GSU) faculty members, Roberta O'Shea, Ph.D., PT, and Elizabeth Cada, Ed.D, OTR/L, FAOTA, each received the 2006 Pioneer Award from the Crossroads Coalition. The awards ceremony took place at St. James Hospital in Chicago Heights, Illinois.



The Crossroads Coalition, formed in 1998, is a collaboration of community agencies and healthcare providers in the south suburbs. The group addresses the maternal and child healthcare needs of low-income residents to ensure access to quality, convenient, and affordable care. Over the past eight year, the coalition has been instrumental in the development of successful "safety net" systems of care and access for community residents.

Dr. Elizabeth Cada, is a professor and Occupational Therapy Department Chair, and Dr. Roberta O'Shea is an Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy at Governors State University.

Cada and O'Shea were recognized for their work with Project EXPORT, a research venture funded by the National Institutes of Health's Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities. Their work falls within GSU's portion of Project EXPORT, "Developing Infrastructure in Health Disparities Research." The research addresses community needs and solutions for the area of innovative treatment approaches and policy barriers related to Cerebral Palsy in children and adults.

The honorees were acknowledged for the multicultural scope of their work. In support of both the mission of the Crossroads Coalition and Project EXPORT, they made strides to ensure that their efforts address and support the healthcare needs of the south suburbs' multicultural population.

"We look forward to continuing to expand community dialogue and the efforts to address the region's healthcare issues," said O'Shea. "While the receipt of this award is an honor, it's also important to recognize the strides that are being made in these areas thanks to collaborations between area healthcare providers, educational institutions like GSU, and community organizations."

Jennifer Artis, Director of Public Affairs at St. James Hospital and Crossroads Coalition Board Member, presented each recipient with a traditional Ghanaian art object, called the Gyenyame. Historically, the object is given to leaders and policy makers who contribute significantly to the community. A symbol, called the Community Clasp, is contained within the object and represents the power and ability of unity to accomplish a specific goal for the good of the whole community.

"Our Pioneer Award honors those who embrace the mission of the Crossroads Coalition," said Artis. Initially apprehensive about Cada and O'Shea's project, Artis became an avid supporter of the project, after the doctors proved how their research served the diverse community surrounding St. James Hospital. "I was happy to nominate Dr. Cada and Dr. O'Shea this year. I'd like to commend them on their great work, outreach, and sensitivity to multicultural issues," Artis added.

Governors State University's College of Health Professions supports several community and research based projects. For more information, please call (708) 534-4388.