

Dr. Charlotte Maguire honored as "Great Floridian"

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- Dr. Charlotte Maguire's parents always told her when she was growing up that she could do anything in life if she set her mind to it.

She really took that advice to heart.

Now 94 years old, Dr. Maguire was recognized Thursday as a visionary pioneer in medical education as Gov. Rick Scott gave her a prestigious "Great Floridian" award.

Dr. Maguire helped start two medical schools in Florida, treated many disabled children for free in her pediatric practice and was one of the highest ranking women in the federal government in the 1970s.

She earned her medical degree in 1944 and practiced for 50 years. Maguire also helped create medical schools at the University of Florida and Florida State. She even donated her own money to help start FSU's College of Medicine.

As she spoke to the crowd gathered at the medical school in her honor, Maguire recalled all the effort it took to bring the College of Medicine to FSU.

"Guess what. We worked and we worked and we met and we went to the Legislature. We did all the things we're supposed to do and look what we have. Here it is."

Gov. Scott called her the mother of Florida's medical school.

"To this day Dr. Maguire remains actively involved with students and has become an advocate for access to primary health care and quality of life for seniors."

FSU President Eric Barron described Dr. Maguire as one of the most influential physicians in Florida.

"A visionary pioneer in medical education as well as an extraordinary teacher, mentor and practitioner, she is a treasured friend to Florida State University. Not only was she instrumental in the creation of our College of Medicine, she continues to guide and support our medical students with passion, and they benefit immeasurably. I can think of no one who more richly deserves this honor."

Dr. Charlotte Maguire becomes the 74th Floridian to receive the Great Floridian honor since 1981.

She said her father taught her the value of saving money. So as a child, she set her mind to saving what she earned picking up nails. Every Saturday she would go to the bank and make a deposit.

"For every bucket of nails that I picked up, I got 10 cents. So my story, the headline of my life is, '10 cents a bucket.'"

And Florida is vastly richer for her many contributions.