



**Florida State University**  
**ARF News Special Feature**  
February 2023



*28th President of ARF (2006-07)*  
**Fanchon Funk**

**FANCHON FELICE FUNK**



HER ROYAL HIGHNESS ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER. AND FANCY

Fancy selected from among 500 American Teacher Exchanges to present the gift to the Queen Mother.

**Reception for all Teacher Exchanges and their guests.**

Lancaster House

London, England

**FANCHON FELICE FUNK, Ed.D.**

**Professor Emerita**

**College of Education**

**1970 – 2004**



Fanchon Felice Funk, Ed.D., is Professor Emerita of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, College of Education at Florida State University. She also served as Associate Director of the Center for Performance Technology where she was involved with the Florida Schoolear 2000 Initiative (SY2000) in the research and development, design and implementation of a customer satisfaction measurement process for Florida school districts. Dr. Funk has 34 years of experience in teaching, research, and service in Florida.

Dr. Funk served as Director of Clinical Education for the College of Education and University, Director of Special Programs for Community College and Inter-institutional Relations, and Principle Investigator and Program Director for the Florida State University/Walt Disney World Educator Seminars. She also served as Director of Alumni Affairs for the College of Education, a unit of the Office of the Dean.

She has co-authored nine books and has written numerous articles for professional journals. She has also presented professional programs for public and private organizations in more than 25 states, the Caribbean, South Africa and Europe. These highly motivational programs involved the design of creative instructional materials to meet identified employee needs. In 1984, Dr. Funk co-designed two courses which were offered by THE WALT DISNEY WORLD CO. and The Florida State University. These two courses, "**Communicating, Disney Style: Adding Magic to the Classroom**" and "**Marketing Positive Images About Schools**" attracted over 16,000 educators from throughout the world.

Dr. Funk, is a recipient of the ***President's Excellence in Teaching Award*** at Florida State University and **Professor of the Year at the Florida State University Panama City**. She was also recognized by the National Association of Teacher Educators as "*one of 70 distinguished leaders in teacher education in the nation and is the recipient of the 2004 ATE Distinguished Member Award – the association's highest award.*" She was selected as the inaugural recipient of the prestigious *Roy L. Lauter Award for Distinguished Service Award* from the Southeastern Regional Association of Teacher Educators (2004), The Florida Association of Teacher Educators honored Dr. Funk through the establishment of the *FATE Dr. Fanchon F. Funk Scholars Award* which will be awarded annually to four undergraduate teacher education students from throughout Florida.

The **President of the United States, George H.W. Bush**, recognized Dr. Funk as a "**Point of Light**" for her volunteer work with *Tennis With a Different Swing, Inc. (September 20, 1991, Point # 543)*. She has **received The Governor's Presidential Daily Point of Light" Award** for groundbreaking research with captive swans (*November 14, 2005, Point Number #3072*).

Dr. Funk is a Past President of the FSU Association of Retired Faculty and Staff (ARF) and is a Board member of the International Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE),. She has chaired and served on several AROHE Committees from 2008 to the present.

Dr. Funk was selected as a Fulbright Teacher Exchange, 1962-1963 where she taught science to all students enrolled at the Mount Secondary School, Ilford, Essex, England. During this year, she was selected from among 500 American Exchanges to present the annual recognition to Her Royal Highness Elizabeth The Queen Mother, Lancaster House, London, England, June 28, 1963.

Dr. Funk earned two undergraduate degrees from Western Carolina University, receiving a B.S. in Biology and a B.S. in Education. She earned her Masters Degree in Biology and Education at Appalachian State University and earned her doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction, with collateral areas in Higher Education and Public Health, at the University of Tennessee/Knoxville.

#### **Earned Certificates:**

Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Tallahassee, FL  
Instructor Certification  
Areas: General Subjects and Human Diversity  
Certificate: 1998

Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois  
National Science Foundation Grant  
Summer Institute, Major: Biology  
Certificate, 1966

Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Virginia  
National Science Foundation Grant  
Summer Institute, Major: Chemistry  
Certificate, 1960

## **Real Gusto Through Membership and Participation in Civic and Social Organizations**

By

Fanchon Felice Funk, Ed.D. – “Fancy”

Professor Emerita

Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies



“Fancy” serves as Vice-President of Research and Education for the RSF and traveled with five other researchers from the program to collaborate with swan keepers from the UK and Latvia. Abbotsbury Swannery is the largest and oldest managed colony of nesting mute swans in the world. In 1993 the

Swannery celebrated its 600th anniversary. Working with David Wheeler, the head Swan Herd, team members gathered reeds, also used in thatching, and built nests for the 900+ wild swans who call the area home.



This chapter appears in a publication edited by Dr. Freddie Groomes-McLendon, “Real Gusto Comes Later: How Professional Women Experience

Retirement”

Connectedness

Social connectedness is one of the most important predictors of health and independence in later years.

-G. Richard Ambrosius, Author of Choices and Changes<sup>1</sup>

When I look back over my life’s journey, I see how my love of learning and teaching has helped me build connections that have given my life gusto! Well, the journey doesn’t end with retirement, and I was determined that my “life after work” would be fun, people-involved and meaningful. I knew that my involvement in social and civic associations was an answer for this part of my life journey.

As I share some of my life’s story with you, I hope you may get some ideas that will help you reflect on your own life and see how what you have loved and accomplished can lay the foundation for a joyful future. I like what Connie Goldman said about life-learning in the dedication of her book on conversations with women in mid-life and the years beyond: “there are life lessons to be learned from others as well as from inside your very self.”<sup>2</sup>

You may have read some of the research that says that people with strong relationships remain more vital both mentally and physically in the later

years.<sup>3</sup> Research also reveals that one of our basic needs is to belong, to be part of something beyond and greater than ourselves. That has certainly been true for me and is even more so now in my retirement.

My connections begin with the love of my family (my mother and father, grandparents, sister, four nieces and nephews, nine grand nieces and nephews, one great grand niece, and my godson). These important connections continue to my extended families through spiritual, civic and social organizations. These are the connections that give my life real gusto. There is a saying associated with my birth city of New Orleans that, to me, literally shouts GUSTO in life:

*L’aissez, les bons temps rouler!*

The translation for this is “Let the good times roll!”

By the way, my connection to New Orleans provides the answer to a question I am frequently asked: Where in the world did your nickname come from? One answer is that “Fancy” is a name that goes back before the Civil War. A Louisiana family named their daughter that because an older child looked at her new baby sister who had bright red hair and declared, ‘She’s not like our other baby, she’s more fancy. Every other generation now has a Fancy.’<sup>4</sup> A simpler explanation for my name is that “Fancy” is short for Fanchon, which was difficult to spell and pronounce.

Now, back to my pursuit of gusto. Since I officially retired January 31, 2004 after 34 years of employment as a faculty member in the College of Education, Florida State University (FSU) and designated Professor Emerita October 15, 2003, I have been involved in a number of civic and social organizations. I found, as you may also, that my past interests, connections, and experiences have formed a basis for this exciting new stage in my life. Thinking back over how I got to where I am now, I see several common themes that intertwine to make my life today rich and rewarding.

### Get Active and Stay Active

By now you know that in order to enjoy life, you must work to stay healthy by exercising both mind and body. My favorite physical exercise is swimming, but I also enjoy a good workout at the gym. To exercise my mind, I enjoy reading and travel. While these things help to keep me fit, they are not enough to maintain that vitality that brings gusto to life. My joy comes from working with people by networking and opening doors for others—in other words, making connections. Many folks have done this for me, and I've got a lot of giving back to do!

My life of being connected didn't end when I retired, and it didn't begin there, either. What I do now is a continuation of civic and social activities that began in the early days of my career. I have always been involved in education. In 1958, I began teaching biology, chemistry, and physics at Lee Edwards High School in Asheville, N.C. I also joined the Asheville Classroom Teachers' Association (CTA). Two years later, the President of this organization inspired and encouraged me to follow in her footsteps to participate in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program. I was serving on the Board of the CTA in 1961 when I learned that my application to the Fulbright Program had been accepted. I taught science in Ilford, Essex, England in 1962-1963. While in Europe, I participated in personal seminars for Comparative Education Studies, visiting schools of all levels in nineteen countries. I don't believe I would have had this incredible experience had I not become involved in the CTA and made the connection with the President who encouraged me.

Well, by this time I was in love with education. Not being satisfied with two Bachelor of Science degrees in Biology and Education (Western Carolina University), I completed a Masters in Arts degree in Biology and Junior College Instruction (Appalachian State University). I next earned my Doctoral Degree in

Curriculum and Instruction, with collateral areas in Higher Education and Public Health (University of Tennessee, Knoxville) in 1970.

I began my career at FSU in August, 1970, as an area coordinator of student teaching/field experiences. Six years later I became Director of the Office of Clinical Education and was promoted to associate professor with tenure in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies. If I were a less active person, I might have been satisfied to limit my service to that position, but there was more I wanted to give, and each new opportunity for service created new connections to the future.

Other administrative positions that I held with the University were: Director of Inter-Institutional Relations, Associate Director of the Center for Performance Technology, and

Customer Satisfaction Researcher for the SchoolYear 2000 Initiative. While these positions helped me to develop professionally, it was my direct involvement with students that helped me satisfy some of my desire to give back. For example, I served as Instructor in the innovative First Year Experience Program for entering freshmen at FSU and as a Mentor for the University Genesis Program for outstanding freshmen students who were destined to become future leaders of the university. I rounded out my career at FSU by serving as Director of the Office of Alumni Affairs in the Dean's Office, College of Education (COE). Interacting with COE graduates throughout the world was a fantastic experience. As they shared their accomplishments, I could see the continuation of growth that began at FSU.

There are many other opportunities to maintain connections and activities that are begun during one's career days. For me, these include being active in my Church, The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, the Order of the Eastern Star, the Rebekah Lodge, Omicron Delta Kappa Honorary, Phi Kappa Phi Honorary, Kappa Delta Pi International Honorary Society in Education, the Mortar

Board National College Honor Society, the University Center Club Board of Governors and the Capital Women's Network.

"Every job is a reflection of the person who did it

– autograph your work with excellence"

I believe so strongly in this quote that I use it in the signature line of my email address. I also can relate this quote to something John Barrymore said: "Happiness often sneaks through a door you didn't know you left open." Doing your very best in all that you do can open doors for you to pursue what interests you most. Sometimes pursuing excellence provides opportunities you never dream will appear. Here is one I never expected: During my participation in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange, I was deeply honored to have been selected by Her Majesty's Minister for Education for the Official Presentation to Her Royal Highness Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, on behalf of American Fulbright Teacher Exchanges (79 in England and 421 in other countries) at a Formal Reception in London in July, 1963.

In my early years as an educator, I was pleased to be selected to participate in two National Science Foundation programs for science teachers, one in 1960 and the other in 1966. I learned that taking time to participate in such activities can provide opportunities to meet many new people who share common interests. I still take advantage of opportunities today that allow me to meet new people and grow.

Another experience that I will never forget was the ten years I served as the Facilitator and Coordinator for the worldwide Walt Disney World Educator Seminars, offered for academic credit through FSU. During this time, over 14,000 educators from every state in the nation and 38 countries joined us at Disney World to participate at what I refer to as the greatest experiential learning

laboratory in the world. Would I have been selected for this honor if I had never been as active and involved as I was in my career to this point?



I also discovered that excellence in community service can be rewarded as well as rewarding. The FSU - DELTA Alumni Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) is the Honorary of the Community Colleges, and its bright undergraduate students are high achievers dedicated to both their academic studies and community service. Community service activities included serving meals at The Shelter for the Homeless. I was delighted to serve as Advisor for the FSU chapter of PTK for over nine years and must brag a little about these special students. The chapter began in 1984 with three students and by 1992 had grown to over 50 students per year. During this time, the chapter won every award available at the state and national levels! I still hear from several of these students and rejoice in their amazing accomplishments.

I feel very blessed to have been recognized for my efforts in teacher education, not only during my career, but in the year of my retirement. In 2004, I received the Roy L. Lauter Distinguished Service Award from the Southeastern Regional Association of Teacher Educators, the highest member recognition by this extremely active regional association. Also in 2004, I received the Association of Teacher Educators Distinguished Member Award, the highest recognition of a member at the national level.

### Keep Expanding Your Connections

I continue many of the activities I began during my professional career. One of these is supporting education and building a family connection to community and future generations. In 2008, I was elected an Honorary Member of the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine Alumni Association and was presented with the Distinguished Patron Award of the American Osteopathic Association

(AOA). As the daughter and granddaughter of Osteopathic Physicians, I feel certain that my early career goal of becoming an osteopathic physician would have been a reality had I not fallen in love with the profession of education.

When presented with the patron award by the National AOA President, I shared the following: "I support the scholarship program at the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine in memory of my father and grandfather, who were the first father and son to graduate in the same year from KCOM. That year was 1931 (records indicate this has not happened since). I know that through such gifts, future generations of medical students will receive the same outstanding training in osteopathic medicine that my father and grandfather received. Each year it is an honor to receive the thank you notes from the student doctors who have received these scholarships. My family and I celebrate these young doctors whose education we have been able to support. I am deeply honored."

My connection with education and the future also continues through FSU. During my professional career, I was fortunate to have been the recipient of several outstanding teaching awards and recognitions. However, the most amazing and gratifying event occurred at my retirement reception on January 29, 2004, when it was announced that my students, family, colleagues, and friends had established an endowed scholarship in my name! Each year, undergraduate and graduate teacher education majors in the FSU College of Education will enjoy financial benefits from this scholarship. This is absolutely thrilling and at the same time extremely humbling.

Philanthropy has become a passion in my retirement. Throughout my life people have made such comments to me as . . . bet you've never met a stranger. True! I enjoy meeting people and learning about the uniqueness of each one. In 2008, a new and active group was formed at FSU: The Women for Florida State University. A similar group was formed ten years ago at my alma mater, the

University of Tennessee, the Alliance of Women Philanthropists. These women are on the move. Most have reached that energized state in life called retirement. Fund raising and remaining connected to one's institution (whether by degree or adopted by employment) is absolutely invigorating!

My involvement with scholarships and fundraising for Florida universities did not begin when I retired. From 1986 until the present, I have been a member and Chair of the Board of Directors (1999-2000) of the Southern Scholarship Foundation (SSF). The SSF is a non-profit organization that provides rent free housing for over 415 students living in 25 scholarship houses located near four Florida University campuses. I am now delighted to bring the perspective of a retiree to this Board. My fund raising learning curve has definitely taken an energized leap forward for SSF. This is a wonderful way for retiree associations of all kinds to become mentors and provide support to assist young students in obtaining their degrees.

Some fundraising activities are great fun—such as being a docent. For the past four years I have enjoyed meeting hundreds of dedicated members of the Tallahassee Symphony Society by serving as a docent for the annual Holiday Tour of Homes, which is a fundraiser for the Symphony. I am also one of fifteen members of the FSU Association of Retired Faculty (ARF) who have volunteered to serve as docents for the FSU's President's House since its opening August 2007. We have the opportunity of welcoming thousands of guests and visitors to this beautiful house and sharing their excitement for this part of the University's history.

There are other valuable associations in which to become active. In August 2008, ARF joined the prestigious International Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE). At the 2008 International Conference held at the University of Southern California, I was pleased to be

elected to the AROHE Board of Directors. Presently, as Chair of International Regional Conferences for AROHE, I was engaged in planning the first Regional which will be a Meeting-at-Sea for Retirement Organizations in Higher Education in North America, April 2011.

For a change of pace, I have enjoyed serving on the Executive Board of Directors of the Character & Heritage Institute, a non-profit multi-media company which provides education through the arts. It is exciting to work with young people and educators and observe the DVD "movie" they produce in three weeks. This program, Operation Filmmaker, is presently focused on Middle and High School students with plans to move production to the lower grades as well. Participants quickly learn that this program is about more than making a movie.

Another change of pace, and a return to my early interest in biology and science, is my involvement with The Regal Swan® Foundation, Inc. As a member of the Board of Directors and Vice President, I have written articles for professional journals and have co-authored several books, including the SWAN KEEPER'S HANDBOOK: A Guide to the Care of Captive Swans. The Regal Swan® Foundation, Inc. is a research team based in Orlando, Florida. The team is composed of professionals from a variety of avian and medical disciplines worldwide and is committed to the humane veterinary medical care of swans.

Collaborating with Her Majesty's Swan Warden, Dr. Christopher Perrins (London, England), nine of the 31 worldwide members of the research team were invited to England in the summer of 2007 to conduct research concerning the pink flamingo (pink feathers) syndrome. The medical care and feeding of the English Mute Swan is our specialty, and I found it fascinating to have the unique opportunity of being part of the British research agenda for swans. In addition, being part of the annual Swan Upping in England is one of those experiences that is unforgettable. A Swan Upping is a practice that began in medieval times when

the English Crown claimed ownership of all mute swans and involves the capture, counting, marking and physical examination of the swans. Historically, The Queen's Swan Warden, whose role is scientific and non-ceremonial, rings cygnets with individual identifications numbers.

Research team members have given presentations to education and scientific groups, universities, zoos and museums, Florida PK-12 teachers, community organizations, and numerous professional associations. We have a passion for our work. In fact, being passionate about what you do is a key to living with Gusto!

### Going for the Gusto

The GUSTO in retirement has captured my heart, and I want to be among people who enjoy life as much as I do. In 2006, I became a founding member of the Westcott Lakes Life Fulfilling Community, a.k.a., the Pavilion at Westcott Lakes. Knowing that this community would be sponsored by FSU really captivated me. What a win-win partnership! The academic and cultural opportunities provided by FSU will be numerous and exceptional. It will be great fun to have wonderful friends as neighbors in a lifelong learning environment.

I know that by now you must be saying to yourself—but I thought she was retired! Well, life is just too much fun not to stay involved and connected. I like a quote by Peter Drucker in a research study on aging and civic engagement: “The best way to predict the future is to create it.”<sup>5</sup> We can create a positive future by enjoying life, friends, family, extended family, and involvement in and through religious, civic, and professional engagements. And if life so far has limited your opportunities to connect and get involved, it's not too late to start to create a future that will bring you gusto!

Yes, there are other engagements and responsibilities I have assumed at FSU and in other organization

in this article: GUSTO. With pleasure I add some of the following: Served as ARF President, 2006-2007; AROHE Board and several committees chair positions and member, 2008-to present; Rotary Club of Tallahassee chair of the Resolution Committee and Chaplain and Chair of the Chaplain's Council (which I started); Program and Membership Committees. My membership in Rotary began September 19, 2012. I was honored as the Service Above Self Award recipient Award from our Club .My most recent venture in my retirement was the decision to move to the beautiful; Westminster Oaks Retirement Community in Tallahassee. It didn't take long to become involved as one of four residents of the Cultural Endowment Program Selection Committee as well as serving as Block Captain for emergency notifications to fellow residents regarding weather events., etc. In 2014 I had the pleasure of beginning the partnership with Westminster Oaks (BUS sponsor) ) and the Tallahassee Symphony Society Board to host the first Tour of Homes event in Tallahassee. Organizing this event seemed a natural as I had served as a docent for the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra.

I began this chapter with a quotation from G. R. Ambrosius, and I will end it with another of his wise sayings: "By mindfully pursuing positive aging, later life may come to be perceived as the crown jewel of the human experience."<sup>6</sup> Yes indeed, as we say in New Orleans, let the good times roll! The best is yet to come.

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1 Ambrosius, G. Richard, Choices and Changes: A Positive Aging Guide to Life Planning, Xlibris Corporation, 2006.

2 Goldman, Connie. Who Am I...Now That I'm Not Who I was? Conversations with women in mid-life and the years beyond. 2009.

3 AARP and the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, Current Advance in Brain Research, "Staying Sharp – Quality of Life, Washington, D.C., 2005, p.97.

4 Schwartz, Marlyn. A Southern Belle Primer. 2001. p.9.

5 Civic Ventures and Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning, Recasting Retirement: New Perspectives on Aging and Civic Engagement (2002). The publication highlights the findings and was sponsored by a grant from the Helen Andrus Benedict Foundation.

6 Ambrosius, 2006. p.120.