

FCC NEWSLETTER



FONTBONNE COMMUNITY CONNECTION – A WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE

Fontbonne's Study Abroad Program Focuses On Germany Through the Holocaust

By Margaret Gilleo

The Holocaust of the Second World War was one of the most radically evil events in human history. In the aftermath of the war, significant efforts were made by the newly formed United Nations and others to insure that such horror would never happen again. As we have entered the second decade of the twenty-first century, fewer people remain alive who actually experienced the Holocaust or remember it as it happened. For today's young people, it has receded into an ever more distant past.

The Fontbonne students who participated in the study abroad program were an exuberant group, talking happily and easily given to laughter. Yet, as we moved intensely into our study and when we visited Holocaust sites, their demeanor changed dramatically. Although they had learned about the Holocaust in school, read books about it, seen movies about it, they had never understood the living reality of it until participating in the *Germany through the Holocaust* program.

At a visit to our first concentration camp Sachsenhausen, our tour guide was a young German graduate student studying for his doctorate in history. He told the students that he and many other Germans his age had a very difficult time facing the ominous burden of responsibility for the Holocaust, even though they were not even born at the time. He was committed to working to ensure that nothing like it would ever happen again. My message to my students was that a fuller understanding of the Holocaust, its causes, and its unprecedented brutality was the first goal of the program. But even more important was to ask themselves, "What would I have done if I saw this happening around me? How can I recognize small signs of incipient discrimination in my own community today? What can I do to stop it and to build understanding between people?" My hope is that they will continue to reflect on these questions and that each one will find her or his unique and personal way to make the world a better place.

Margaret Gilleo served as Affiliate Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Fontbonne University for nearly 12 years and led this study program in Germany, which received funding from an FCC award.



Students visited the courtroom at Nuremberg, where the groundbreaking trials of Nazi war criminals were conducted by the United States, England, France, and Russia.

International Students' Fontbonne Experience Is Enhanced By FIRST LEADERS Mentor Program

By Mary Schenkenberg



The FIRST LEADERS program which FCC supported last year, served the growing international student community at Fontbonne: 45 incoming international students and a larger community of more than 200 Chinese, Chilean, Brazilian, Japanese, Saudi Arabian students and others from 27 countries.

Our award enabled the Departments of Student Affairs and International Affairs to train three student mentors, who interacted personally with each incoming international degree-bound student throughout the year. The program was overseen by Leslie Doyle, Director of Service, Diversity and Social Justice, and was the brain-child of student Isabella Liu, who had watched a friend leave Fontbonne when she didn't feel "connected." Liu did not want that to happen again. She thought students could help, and she was right. Mentors were trained in cultural sensitivity, the culture shock that international student's experience, and communication skills. Ms. Doyle said, "Leaders were highly motivated and responsible. Each Leader checked in monthly with the 15 students assigned to them, to see how each was doing academically, socially, and personally." *Story continued on page 3.*

Service to the University Alumni Award Maggie Gunn Fowler '64

The Service to the University Award recognizes an alumnus or alumna who demonstrates outstanding loyalty, service and dedication to the university and to the Fontbonne Alumni Association. Among the four alums honored was FCC member Maggie Gunn Fowler.

Following her graduation from Fontbonne with a Bachelor of Arts in Speech and Drama (now Theatre), Maggie served as a papal volunteer high school teacher for two years in British Honduras, now known as Belize.

She taught St. Joseph's Academy students Speech and Drama from 1966-1970. After raising five children, she embarked on a career in fund development including the position of Fontbonne's Director of Development in 2004-2005, from which she retired upon the birth of a first grandchild.

Throughout family, community and professional endeavors, Maggie has maintained her service to Fontbonne University as a member of the Fontbonne Alumni Board. She has balanced volunteer work for her parishes, children's schools and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Motherhouse; and for six years, she served on the board of Women in Charge, founded by Fontbonne alum Victoria Bayot Sharp.

Recognizing the value in giving back to Fontbonne, Maggie is a charter member of the Fontbonne Community Connection. She is especially active on the Membership Committee serving the past two years as Co-Chair with Karen Gedera. Maggie has participated in countless Fontbonne University activities including campaigns, FCC events, and spirituality events. This year she co-chaired, with Mary Beth Olyniec Westhoff, the 1964 Class 50th Anniversary Reunion Committee.

"...Thanks to Fontbonne -- and Ed (Fowler) -- I am a philanthropist! As members of the Fontbonne Community Connection women's giving circle, we can do what we would never be able to do alone-- help faculty, staff and students turn their talent, skills, dreams and ingenuity into reality."



L-R President Dr. J. Michael Pressimone, Maggie Gunn Fowler and Alumni Association President Christina Anderson.

Founders Award: Bonnie Eckelkamp Distinguished Service to Fontbonne



The Fontbonne University Founders Award symbolizes the recipients' place in a history that dates back to the 1650 founding of the Sisters of St. Joseph in LePuy, France, and demonstrates quality, respect, diversity, community, justice, faith, and Catholic presence --service wherever needed. Sister Mary Charity Dalton and FCC member Bonnie Eckelkamp were 2014 honorees. Over the years, more than a dozen FCC members have been recipients of these awards.

"One of the primary focuses at Fontbonne is giving to community. That's what drew me to become a board member initially and ultimately stay involved in many other capacities. I grew up in a Catholic family where we learned the values of giving back, and Fontbonne is an incredible institution that thrives on value and virtue."

Whether in her home town of Washington, MO, or the greater St. Louis area, Bonnie has devoted countless hours to volunteering for many organizations. She has played a key role in the advancement of educational, cultural and civic organizations in the greater metropolitan area.

L-R Fontbonne Alumni Association President Christina Anderson, Dr. J. Michael Pressimone, Bonnie Eckelkamp and Sr. Paulette Gladis, CSJ.

Bonnie has contributed to numerous educational causes at Fontbonne University where she served on the Board of Trustees for nine years and also co-chaired a \$20 million capital campaign for the renovation of Anheuser Busch Hall. She and her husband, L.B. Eckelkamp, have made generous contributions to the school, including a large gift that resulted in the

naming of the Eckelkamp College of Global Business and Professional Studies.

Bonnie's time and efforts have also helped St. Francis Borgia parish, for whom she chaired a \$3 million capital campaign for renovations, as well as the Today and Tomorrow Educational Foundation and the Saint Louis Art Museum, for whom she serves as a member of the Friends Board.

Bonnie's contributions have sharpened Fontbonne's ongoing commitment to being a preferred college destination. For her dedication to the advancement of Fontbonne University and the promotion of its mission, Bonnie is recognized as a recipient of the 2014 Founders Award for Distinguished Service to Fontbonne University.

A Conversation With– FCC Vice President Angelia Gosney

Interviewed by Kathy Miceli

We are pleased to have Angelia serving as FCC's Vice President. She is a graduate of Villa Duchesne (pre K-12) and attended Saint Louis University. Her early career was in banking. Today, she and her husband operate river terminals and contract packaging businesses. Angelia works part-time at Brooking Park, visiting with elderly residents in the rehabilitation unit. Those lucky residents are, I am sure, as charmed by her presence as we are at the FCC. Angelia has four children, one biological child, and three bonus (her word) children.

Q: Why did you join the FCC?

A: I like the idea that all money is given away, and I also like the camaraderie of the women. I have never witnessed such a dynamic group of women in one place! I had no affiliation with Fontbonne before joining the FCC, and now, I feel very much a part of it.

Q: How did you learn about FCC?

A: Karen Gedera invited me to a "lunch and learn." It was fun, and I actually cooked something edible! It was amazing to hear the award recipients talk about how the grants had affected and changed lives. We all can write a check anywhere and never know where the money goes, but at FCC, we see real results. I like to say I am just a small pebble making a ripple but, together we become a huge boulder!

Q: What have you learned from the FCC?

A: I learned that pumpkin can be substituted for oil when baking. And, I have seen the profound influence FCC makes when we bond together for a purpose. With our strategic generosity, we can achieve great things.

Q: What do you like best about the FCC?

A: What I like best is the sisterhood of the members. I am an only child, and although I did not attend Fontbonne as many other members did, I truly feel welcome and that I belong.



FIRST LEADERS cont. from page 1

Mentors submitted a monthly report on each student, so Doyle could follow up with students who had issues or concerns. Some she advised herself; others she referred to University professionals.

The stewards of this FCC award did a wonderful job surveying students and evaluating experiences. Eighty-three percent of international students served said First Leaders programs made their transition to Fontbonne a good experience. Ninety-four percent said they would recommend the program to other students, and 73 percent felt it increased their independence in making life decisions.

First Leaders supported Fontbonne as well. "The existing structure of the international office has been strengthened, as the need for personnel and support for international students is clear," wrote Liu. And it seems to have increased retention and recruiting of international students.

Both Leslie and Isabella say, "Thank you, FCC, for giving us the opportunity to institute this program. We believe it helped with retention and played a role in ensuring students had a great and familiar Fontbonne experience" The International Bazaar on the campus November 18 in the Maybee Gym, features student booths, performers, vendors, and food from local ethnic restaurants. FCC members are invited to attend the event from noon until 2 p.m. to see one of the ripple effects from the First Leaders award.



International students and mentors.



Message from the Chair



Hello fellow FCC Members,

Dr. J. Michael Pressimone's upcoming Inauguration as President of Fontbonne University offers a full week of celebratory events, and we're both proud and humbled that he has asked the FCC to be officially represented at his Investiture Ceremony on Friday, November 14. That speaks volumes about Dr. Pressimone's belief in the exciting difference FCC makes to Fontbonne faculty, staff and students. Cheers to each of you for the very real benefits that your generosity is making possible.

Our newest FCC member and Fontbonne's "First Lady," Cathy Pressimone, is opening her lovely home to us, for a festive FCC Fall Celebration on November 19th, just after Inauguration Week. Great opportunity to see recent renovations and visit informally with the "first family!" Prospective members are also most welcome, so please extend an invitation to someone who might consider joining; each additional member means that more academic hopes and dreams can be realized.

Focusing on that difference each person makes, FCC members attended the campus Mass on Sunday evening, Feast of All Souls, in remembrance of our dearly departed Kathy Coco, Jean Emory, Nancy Jersa and Doris Wilson. It was so rewarding, after Mass, to share memories of these lovely women and how their dedication continues to bless our circle!

Finally, my personal commendation to the FCC Awards Committee for their update and revision of award application documents, which will be available online, for 2015 awards cycle applicants. Thanks for your great work...and we anticipate an equally great awards season ahead!

Joan

Joan Buxton Falk
FCC Chair 2014-2015

New Member Spotlight– Mary Lee Walter



When Mary Lee Walter (Fontbonne '68, UMSL '76) was introduced to the FCC several years ago, she was impressed with the organization and its mission, however the timing wasn't yet right for her to become a member.

Fortunately for the FCC, this alum who values the CSJ's centuries old commitment to the "dear neighbor," joined our giving circle upon her recent retirement from a 43-year career at St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf.

Mary Lee attended an FCC open house presentation and was impressed by the number and scope of projects funded by the women of FCC's collective giving and collaboration. Mary Lee observed, "I see the FCC as an opportunity for one little person to join others and make a big impact in someone else's life. Never underestimate the Power of One!"

Our new member has found FCC members to be dedicated, involved and serious about the causes their philanthropy helps, and she enjoys being part of a group of like-minded, committed women. It is our good fortune to have her as a member. Welcome, Mary Lee!

Upcoming Events

November 13, 9:00 am

FCC Executive Action Committee Meeting

November 14, 2:30 pm

Inauguration of Fontbonne's new President, J. Michael Pressimone, at the Dunham Student Activity Center.

If you are unable to attend the event, live streaming of the ceremony is being provided on Fontbonne's website. To access the live streaming, visit the official inauguration site: <http://www.fontbonne.edu/academics/president-pressimone/>.

November 18

Jenna M. Voss, Ph.D., CED, LSLS Cert AVEEd.
Assistant Professor & Grant Mentor

Dr. Voss, FCC Membership Chair, will make a presentation to the Fontbonne Alumni Board of Directors, inviting women board members to join the FCC.

November 19, 5:00-7:00 pm

FCC Autumn Celebration at Wydown House
6600 Wydown Boulevard
Home of Cathy and Mike Pressimone