Annual Meeting & Award Announcement

Before Fontbonne Community Connection members get down to business, meetings begin with prayer, and so it was at the FCC's Annual Meeting the at the DSAC on the morning of July 13. Following a traditionally scrumptious brunch provided and overseen by the Events Committee and other volunteers, the FCC meeting officially opened its second decade of giving to benefit Fontbonne University and our community at large. Maggie Fowler, completing her term as FCC Chair, stepped to the podium and led members in an enthusiastic rendition of “Happy Anniversary to Us,” which ended with lively applause -- for us! FCC’s upbeat annual meetings are meaningful, inspiring and a fun time to catch up with friends. Members learn which project applicants their votes have chosen to award FCC funding for the new academic year, retiring officers are thanked and incoming officers congratulated. (See the list on page 7).
At last year’s Planning Meeting, Chair Maggie Fowler, Vice-Chair Mary Schenkenberg and FCC members laid out goals to be achieved during the year. When those objectives were reviewed at year’s end, not only had all goals been achieved, but some new objectives were introduced and others were expanded. Some of these far-reaching, time-intensive achievements include: Overseeing the FCC Tenth Anniversary celebration, creating the FCC Manual, strategically addressing on-going FCC retention and recruiting efforts and focusing on personal needs of members — e.g. The FCC Prayer Link.

New Member Welcome Night

New and current members got to know one another a little better at an informal July 18 gathering in the Jack C. Taylor Library. Over the years, the annual welcoming event has become not only an opportunity for new members to glean further information about the FCC, but also an occasion for current members to better know the philanthropic women committed to the University.

Hosted in the Board Room by the FCC Membership Committee, who helped usher in eight new members during the past 12 months, the majority of them learned about the FCC from a friend.

Seeing and hearing from FCC awardees on campus has also made indelible impressions on members. Theresa Blaskiewicz shared her membership story with the group.

No one present at an FCC autumn membership evening at Wydown House will forget a moving presentation by Randy Miller. FCC members had voted to award a project called GRACE, (Group Rehabilitation for Aphasia Communication Effectiveness), submitted by the Speech and Language Department, intended to improve functional communication skills for adults with neurological conditions. Mr. Miller, a participant in that program, spoke powerfully about what it has meant to him. Carol Sestric had invited Theresa Blaskiewicz to the event. She told the group, “I was convinced, and knew I definitely wanted to be a member.”
Camp Tour Yields S‘More Membership for FCC

Observing children at FCC-funded camps this summer warmed our hearts and even brought us a new member! It was this initial FCC event experience, on June 21, that clinched it for Marilyn Esserman, who is featured on page 4. The obvious enthusiasm and interest that camp participants exhibited made all of us proud of supporting these programs.

FCC members/guests met in the library to hear “S‘More” about FCC and to enjoy light refreshments. Dr. Carmen Russell spoke about Camp GRACE and Camp Cap, and other FCC-funded programs related to Communication Disorders. The tour moved to the Computer Science Department, where Dr. Guanyu Tian challenged cyber-interested youth to learn strategies and methods that keep documents and files safe from harm. On to the Dietetics facilities in AB Hall, where young cooks were learning about food prep from Mary Beth Ohlms — and realizing that healthful eating can also be delicious! The tour concluded with Deaf Education faculty member Paula Gross, who shared the powerful effects of Camp F.I.R.E., as children who share similar challenges learn together.

A sense of belonging and common purpose tied together all these camps, which empower young people to develop new skills, alongside others with similar interests. Delightful examples of the “ripple effect” of FCC!

FCC Funding Helps Train Young Cyber Warriors to Protect Data

In 1983, the first computer networks began to communicate with one another. The Internet was born. Five years later, a young man launched a “worm” on that net that crashed 10 percent of the computers linked to the Internet. The first known hacker was fined $10,000 and sentenced to 400 hours of community work.

Thirty-four years later, Fontbonne has hosted its second annual, highly popular Cyber Warrior Camp for high school-age students. The computer science professor Guanyu Tian and other cyber security experts taught eager high school boys and girls encryption, steganography, digital forensics and other areas related to careers in cyber security.

(Fontbonne was first in the St. Louis area to offer a bachelor degree in cyber security in 2013, before other institutions offered such courses at the undergraduate level.)

“We expect to have a lot of applicants for next year,” said Dr. Tian, “so we’re planning on two camps. This summer the registration spots were filled in three or four days.”

Dr. Tian has expressed his gratitude to FCC sincerely and often, including a shout-out at the conclusion of an article at the end of the St. Louis Review, which also had a sidebar on FCC. The article can be found at http://stlouisreview.com/article/2017-06-29/fontbonne-camp-turns
New Member Marilyn Esserman – Appreciating the Art of Thoughtful Giving

Marilyn Esserman, a Fontbonne Master of Arts alum focused on sculpture (’77), learned about FCC from her friend Karen Gedera. They first met at a Fontbonne Gallery exhibition featuring oil paintings by faculty member Victor Wang, whom both greatly admire. Karen shared information about FCC, and Marilyn was intrigued. Then, she attended the July S’Mores Tour of FCC-sponsored summer camps and knew she wanted to be part of this group of women.

Marilyn calls her excellent arts education at Fontbonne “truly life-changing.” After receiving her degree, she worked as a free-lance graphic artist (primarily for Maritz). She also taught high school photography, design and ceramics in Parkway and Rockwood districts, then spent 15 years as an administrative assistant at Emerson, until her retirement three years ago. And Marilyn says she’s absolutely loving retirement.

New Member Fran Muskopf – Extends FCC to Washington State

Frances Marie Geluso Muskopf Class of ‘84 is a native St. Louisan who, after graduating from Fontbonne with a BS in Business Administration, moved to Puyallup, Washington.

Her two daughters were very young when she returned to college. She chose Fontbonne because it offered Business, with a concentration in Computer Programming, which was exactly what she wanted – a degree combining business management and computer programming.

Fran also had a very personal connection to Fontbonne. In the early 1960’s, Fran’s father, Jim Geluso, was college’s Food Services Director. “I remembered visiting the campus as a child, meeting some of the students and sisters, and hearing my dad talk about Fontbonne — especially the sisters who were so kind to him.”

Following graduation, she began working immediately in Olympia for the Washington State Department of Transportation as a Systems Analyst/Programmer. Two years later, she accepted a Project Management position at the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems. In 1992 she became IT Manager at the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). She retired from DOH in 2013.

Today, Fran and her husband Terry, also retired, trade the rainy winter months in Puyallup for sunny Palm Desert, CA. When they’re at home, they enjoy spending time with their three grandchildren — attending soccer games and just hanging out with them.

In her first two years of retirement, Fran participated on the Family Selection Committee for Habitat for Humanity. “The FCC is similar to the work I did with Habitat -- reviewing applications and participating with others to make good decisions for a good cause,” says Fran. For several years, she read articles in Tableaux about FCC and thought about joining but was busy, and put the thought aside. However, recently, she acted on those thoughts and became a member. “I like the FCC concept and feel honored to be able to give back to Fontbonne in this way.”

Pay It Forward — Share the Giving Experience

FCC’s Sponsorship Fund enables a current member to make an anonymous contribution, of any amount, towards a partial or full membership for a woman. Paying forward shares the FCC giving experience and strengthens our community impact. The Sponsorship Fund is a catalyst that inspires growth for the FCC, a ripple effect from one person to the next, one community to the next.

If you want to learn more about paying it forward, contact Laura Farrar in Advancement: lfarrar@fontbonne.edu or (314) 889-4712.
Amongst all of the exciting things that were occurring on the Fontbonne campus a couple of years ago, there was an underlying feeling that something was missing. To new campus leadership, it became obvious. What was missing were the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet. Not one Sister was on the campus full-time.

That changed in 2015 when Sr. Linda Markway arrived on the Fontbonne campus to become Director of Mission Stewardship. As she has done since her arrival, she makes herself available – and in that availability helps others appreciate the order’s charism – “To be one with God and one with the Dear Neighbor without distinction.”

Born and raised in Jefferson City, MO, she was the eldest of seven Markway children. She very much wanted to go to college and, with help of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Sister Linda attended Incarnate Word University in San Antonio, TX, and received her BA in Elementary Education in 1973. She attended DePaul University and University of Texas, San Antonio, to become a certified special education teacher.

In St. Louis in the early 90’s, she participated in the Archdiocesan “Potential Leadership” program and obtained her MA in Elementary Education Administration through Saint Louis Education ’90.

New Member Lynne Shields – As SLP Department Benefited, She Was Intrigued by Members

Dr. Lynne Shields is Director of Fontbonne’s Graduate Speech Language Pathology (SLP) program and has been a member of the faculty since 1981. She specializes in Counseling, Fluency Disorders and Language Disorders and is active in a number of related professional organizations. Lynne has presented at FCC member events and invited us to attend FCC-sponsored SLP programs, including last fall’s screening of “The Way We Talk,” about stuttering.

“As the department was benefitting from FCC awards, I was enjoying meeting FCC members at various functions,” says Lynne. “My interactions with them were so intriguing that I knew I wanted to be part of this group.” Retirement in May 2018 will provide more time to participate in FCC, more time to pursue her avid interests in reading, gardening and knitting — and, more time for Lynne and her husband, Gavin Perry, to spend with their five grandchildren. “I’m really looking forward to that!” she said. We’re delighted to welcome you as an FCC member, Lynne.

New Member Linda Markway, CSJ – Striving to “Do All That Woman Is Capable of Doing”

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She taught for 25 years in St. Louis, Chicago, Oklahoma City and San Antonio, mostly in Catholic schools. To mix things up a bit, she spent four years as a suburban teacher and then 4 years as a rural school principal – 32 years in all, as an educator.

After years of being encouraged by others, who had seen a religious life and vocation in her future long before she had acknowledged it in herself, Sister Linda entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in 1996 and took her final vows in 2003. Before coming to Fontbonne, the St. Louis Province of the CSJs were blessed to have her serve in their Vocation/Formation Office.

Sister Linda has always loved the outdoors and spends free time walking/hiking paths and trails, or simply sitting quietly watching whatever comes before her. She is an avid mystery reader and an enthusiastic board game player.

She volunteers at Covering House. She also volunteers at Carondelet Community Betterment Foundation in the Motherhouse neighborhood. She became an FCC member by way of FCC’s Sponsorship Fund, through financial support from an anonymous donor.

“I believe that it really is the mission of the FCC that so attracts me…It’s a hands-on response to the quest of every CSJ to do “all that woman is capable of doing”.

The FCC Prayer Link – Prayer Does So Many Things

As Director of Mission Stewardship, Sr. Linda is on Fontbonne’s campus for students, faculty and alums. She works with Advancement personnel and other departments, making certain that the mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the University is parallel. Sr. Linda has also volunteered to coordinate an FCC Prayer Link.

Though FCC members have always offered prayers of solace and support for one another, the Prayer Link will be an additional connecting structure — a means for members to more fully experience the support of one another in response to specific prayer requests.

“The ‘Prayer Link’ is evolving,” says Sr. Linda. “I believe that it will be a good tool for the FCC, as well as the Fontbonne family, to be mindful of the ‘power of prayer’ and Jesus’ invitation, “Where two or more are gathered in my name, there I am.”
The purpose of the Archives and History Committee is to sustain a system that selects, preserves, and provides access to selected FCC documents. The A&H Chair transfers these materials to the Fontbonne University Archivist, to be catalogued and stored in the University Library Archives. Chair: Peggy Ridlen (peggy.ridlen@gmail.com)

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**AWARDS:**
The Awards Committee is responsible for the implementation of the award process and procedures each year. Specific activities and target dates are included in the FCC Master Calendar. Chair: Liz Glaser (lizglaser@sbcglobal.net)

**BYLAWS:**
The Bylaws Committee maintains a current version of FCC Bylaws for online access by all FCC members. In addition, two other documents (FCC Policies & Procedures and the newly-created FCC Manual) are also maintained and are available for reference. Come learn all about the inner workings of our organization, with only a relatively small time commitment. Chair: Barb Atteln: Chair, (b.atteln@sbcglobal.net)

**COMMUNICATIONS:**
The Communications Committee (formerly known Public Relations), communicates the FCC mission to the Fontbonne University community -- administration, faculty, staff and students -- to potential members and to the public. We coordinate media contacts, electronic newsletters, articles and FCC website information. Co-Chairs: Anita Lamont (anita.lamont@charter.com) & Joan Falk (jbfalk@gmail.com)

**EVENTS:**
The Events Committee provides opportunities for FCC members to communicate and socialize with one another and enjoy hearing about the impact of their gifts. The Committee determines the general outline for FCC’s annual events - fall, spring, the FCC Annual Meeting. We also provide support for the Annual Planning Meeting. Committee members know that our planning is critical for keeping members informed and for attracting new members. Chair: Maggi Wester (mbwester@frontiernet.net)

**MEMBERSHIP:**
The FCC Membership Committee promotes the retention of current members and recruits new members. Since activities highlighting FCC-funded projects serve as effective retention and recruiting tools, this Committee actively supports the Events Committee’s Spring and Fall events, which usually feature FCC-funded recipients. All FCC members are considered FCC recruiters and are encouraged to invite friends interested in FCC philanthropic endeavors. We count on additional dedicated “official” service to our committee. Co-Chairs: Mary Lee Walter (mlwhome@live.com) and Becky McDermott (524rma@gamil.com)

**FCC Planning Meeting Wednesday, August 9 — Don’t Miss This Magic Time to Join an FCC Committee**

One of the most important components of the FCC is taking place on August 9 at our Planning Meeting, where goals are discussed and priorities weighed. FCC Founders have often said that with collective intention, magic happens. This is just such an opportunity! Members recently received an invitation to the planning meeting and can RSVP online. There’s even an optional “Buffet Sandwich” social hour following the meeting. Great opportunity to enjoy the company of other members.

This is an ideal time to consider serving on an FCC committee — a wonderful way to be involved in the work of the FCC and to get to know other members. Visit committee break-out sessions at the Planning Meeting to learn more details, or e-mail committee co-chairs whose contact information is listed below. Which committee is “calling” you?

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Congratulations, one and all! We successfully completed FCC’s first decade of making a difference. Ultimately, our combined philanthropic resources enabled faculty, staff and students in every corner of the university to Learn More – Be More. We served the dear neighbor — babies, children, teens and adults (young and old) across our community and beyond. What a story this group photo would tell.

Once more, we thank FCC Founders Nina Bryans, Dede Caspari, Karen Castellano, Kate Gunn and Carol Spehr for their role in giving birth to our special circle. Kudos for successfully recruiting 53 Charter Members during FCC’s first year. Bravo, Charter Members, for courageously investing in Fontbonne’s new women’s philanthropic adventure. Cheers to current (including newest members Marilyn Esserman, Sr. Linda Markway and Dr. Lynn Shields) plus FCC’s past members for a funding decade that generated $812,389 for 142 projects. And to think — this hearty group of female philanthropists has only just begun!

As we revel in our joy, we also mourn the recent loss of Charter Member Janet Zell. Since joining FCC in April 2008, she was abundantly loyal and her generosity continues in her designation of the Fontbonne Community Connection as the recipient of memorials made in her name. May our sister Janet Gerken Zell rest in peace.

FCC’s future is now in exceptionally capable hands. New Chair Joan Kelly is the perfect person to steer our circle into the next decade. She possesses a deep love for Fontbonne, a well-tuned listening ear, incredible wisdom and profound foresight; plus, she has both an impressive professional and sixteen-month FCC resume that includes active Membership Committee engagement and serving as FCC’s 2016-17 Treasurer. I urge you to join Joan at the August 9th Planning Meeting. FCC welcomes your input and help. Just your very presence means a lot to leadership.

Finally, it has been a true blessing to serve as your Chair. I sincerely appreciate your trust and support. May God bless you for blessing me.

Maggie

Maggie Gunn Fowler,
Retiring FCC Chair