Pioneer Days in CSUF’s Reading Program
Deborah Osen Hancock, Ph.D. (Chair 1975-1979),

Dr. Hazel Croy was the original CSUF Reading program pioneer. An Elementary Education faculty member, Dr. Croy recognized early the need for a graduate-level program designed to prepare strong reading teachers and reading specialists.

With encouragement from the highest levels on campus, Dr. Croy planned the coursework and shepherded it through campus and systemwide approval processes. Classes in this fledgling program were offered for the first time in the 1967-68 year, with Dr. Croy serving as the first Reading program coordinator.

I was privileged to join the Reading faculty in the fall of 1969, following ten years teaching in public elementary and secondary schools. Over the next few years, Dr. Croy and I bounced our way through unfamiliar territory like the state’s new Reading Specialist credential program regulations, the establishment of undergraduate reading coursework, and the Institute for Reading.

Dr. Croy and I learned how to make a collaborative inter-institutional effort a reality when CSF’s Reading program worked with Fullerton College on “9 to 90,” which provided reading tutoring for the whole family on Saturday mornings. We also explored learning centers throughout the CSU in order to provide planning support for CSUF’s Learning Center.
The Reading Educators Guild (REG), the first program-specific alumni group at CSUF, appeared during this time, the brainchild of alumni pioneers Peggy Hammer, Pat Irot, and Dixie Shaw.

When I became the Reading program coordinator in 1975, some terrific Reading faculty members had already settled at CSUF. Norma (Barton) Inabinette was working miracles in the Reading clinic and reaching out to school districts all over Orange County with her witty, informative presentations. Ash Bishop had just joined the Reading faculty, bringing a much needed male point of view, sense of humor, and love of literature.

An inspiring group of students were moving through the program, many of whom earned doctoral degrees and/or joined the CSUF Reading faculty. Some of those include Kathi Bartle Angus, JoAnn Carter-Wells, Ruth May (Siegrist), Ann Coil, Mary Ellmann, Jane Hopper, Jane Ballback, and Toni (Maya) Chambers. Many other students made significant contributions at other levels of education in both public and private settings.

With a sound program, strong faculty, and challenging students, what could I do to help bring CSUF’s Reading program to an even higher level of excellence? This was the dilemma that faced me in the fall of 1975.

But not for long! During the summer before I became coordinator, I attended an incredibly valuable CSU-sponsored training program for department chairs. Its goal-oriented focus was solid gold to me and I was off and running!

My first major action was to call for a three-day planning retreat, inviting all faculty (regular and part-time) to participate. For years you’ve heard this story from Ash’s point of view. Here’s mine—we panned for gold and found some real nuggets: five faculty-developed goals to be accomplished over the next three years and specific objectives to be achieved in year one.

The following goals, revised and added to as needed, focused our efforts during the four years I served as coordinator:

- Develop an excellent program for preparing teachers to address the reading needs of elementary, secondary and college students, as well as adults.
- Build strong undergraduate reading courses to address student needs for critical thinking, vocabulary development and enhanced comprehension skills needed in the various academic disciplines.
- Become leaders in the field of reading at local, state and national levels.
- Seek outside funding to support these efforts.
- Encourage the growth of alumni through REG, joint teaching and co-authoring professional articles, as well as encouraging advanced study, as appropriate.

The results:

**Program Development**
- CSUF’s Reading program led the state in developing the Reading Specialist credential, which was based in large part on the master’s program we already had in place. During this time the Reading program had large classes and the highest student enrollment of any Education program. University records show that full time equivalent (FTE) students grew nearly 25%, from 131 in 1974-75 to 171 in 1978-79.
- In order to assure that student needs were addressed during this time of major program change, we established an elected graduate student group (the Reading Graduate Student Coun-
cil) which met periodically to give us feedback. I can still remember meeting around our dining room table while my husband Lewis cranked the ice cream maker out in the patio.

- Courses in the teaching of secondary and college reading were developed, refined, and added to the curriculum.

Ruth May Siegrist received a major grant to develop and implement a program training teachers of adult basic education.

**Undergraduate Coursework**
- A devoted group of faculty, led by Ann Coil, surveyed national trends in reading courses for college students and developed coursework based on an extensive philosophical and research base. They worked closely with me to prepare a rationale for their coursework to present to numerous on-campus committees.
- Faculty began to produce new materials and approaches which were soon published and well received around the country.

As the CSU became more interested in the state of undergraduate reading and writing skills, the UC-CSU Joint Workgroup in Reading and Writing Programs Within the Disciplines was formed. CSUF’s undergraduate coursework experience helped shape the direction of the workgroup’s research.

**Leadership in Reading**
- Undergraduate and graduate faculty became very active in research, publishing widely in state and national journals, making numerous presentations at professional conferences.
- CSUF Reading faculty hosted a series of meetings with their peers around the state about the new Reading Specialist credential. A major outcome of these meetings was the establishment of the California Professors of Reading, a special interest group of the California Reading Association. I had the privilege of serving as the founding President.
- Faculty also served in a variety of leadership roles in the Organization of Teacher Educators in Reading (a special interest group of the International Reading Association), the Western College Reading Association, the California Reading Association, and the Orange County Reading Association.

The Western College Reading Association and the International Reading Association held their annual national conferences in Anaheim during this time. CSUF Reading faculty members played major roles at these conferences.

**Grant Seeking**
- Since the faculty had limited experience in grant writing, we brought in experts to help us learn how to develop effective proposals. We researched likely funding sources and applied for and received a variety of grants, some of which have already been mentioned.

Two grants were received from the University of California and California State University to fund projects of the Joint Workgroup on Reading and Writing Within the Disciplines. I was honored to co-chair this group with Harry Singer of UC Riverside (who was ably assisted by two doctoral candidates--CSUF grads, now professors at CSUF—Hallie and Ruth Yopp).

**Alumni Growth**
- The Institute for Reading provided local conferences, occasional publications, and special events designed to update alumni and attract potential new students. Many of these activities included presentations by alumni, articles co-authored by alumni and Reading faculty, and were often co-sponsored by REG.
All we could do was stand in amazement and encourage REG leaders as they developed a fine newsletter, offered creative learning opportunities to members, and hosted receptions for Reading grads at commencement each year. Soon REG was raising funds for scholarships and member projects, and showing other majors on campus how to establish program-specific alumni groups.

It was with mixed feelings that I left CSUF’s Reading program in 1979 to become Dean of Education at Cal State Bakersfield. On the one hand it was a tremendous opportunity to serve as the first woman Dean of Education in the CSU. On the other I knew I would miss the incredible team that constituted CSUF’s reading program. But they were in good hands!

What a bonanza the CSUF Reading program has become! It has weathered many storms and become ever stronger because of the fine leadership provided by dedicated faculty and alumni over the past 40 years. Blessings on you all as you move toward your golden fiftieth anniversary!

**Thoughts about the Reading Program**
Norma Barton Inabinette PhD(Chair 1979-1987)

As I think back on the years at Fullerton, both as Chair and as a faculty member, my remembrances run in two directions: those things that made the Reading Department/Program so strong and those things that were its biggest challenges.

Let me begin with the good things. The very first and foremost, of course, was the faculty. I don’t think there could have ever been a stronger, more cohesive faculty at any university. The faculty supported each other, complemented each other’s specialty, and worked as friends as well as colleagues. The dedication and respect the faculty had for each other and his/her work made the Department/Program as great as it was.

The second strength was the sequence of courses within the curriculum. Both the undergraduate and graduate programs reflected deliberate and continuing examination, sharing, altering and focus to meet the needs of students in a sensible, cohesive way. No other faculty could have worked as hard as Fullerton’s to make sure that the curriculum was the best it could be.

The greatest challenges in the program rested in two areas, the first being the lack of respect the campus community had for reading, actually education in general. The second was the fluctuation in enrollment that always threatened the viability of the Department/Program.

Education has traditionally been the step child of any university. Fullerton was no exception. When money was in short supply, the Reading Department/Program, especially the undergraduate program, was scrutinized as a possible way to reduce its impact and resources. Fortunately for the Department/Program, it had an extremely strong faculty who not only were good teachers but competent researchers who had evidence that undergraduate reading courses in particular could make a difference. The faculty opted to become actively involved in the University and its committees, making its presence very evident and its value obvious. Faculty earned the respect and confidence of the broader community by demonstrating its commitment and competence.

As enrollment fluctuated due to the availability of reading positions in the schools, the graduate faculty, especially, changed its emphasis. No longer did it stress being a reading specialist for children who were deficient in reading skills, but rather stressed that every teacher was a teacher of reading and, therefore, every teacher should be the best possible reading teacher.
All in all, the success of the program was the faculty. Their competence, dedication, cohesiveness and professionalism made the graduate and undergraduate programs what they are today. The increasing number of students enrolled is testament to that. I truly believe that the appeal of the current program is built on the efforts and successes of those of us who labored for many years to make the reading courses and programs the best they could possibly be.

In the spring I attended a retirement party for several of the local teachers. I was saddened to hear several of them talk about how they think they wasted the best years of their lives on teaching. I was saddened because I can’t think of anything that I would rather have done than be a teacher at CSU Fullerton. The three years I intended to stay at Fullerton turned into 27 of the best years any one could ever hope to have. The experience was my joy, my pride, my intellectual sustenance, and I am a better person for having been a part of something so great. The faculty and students who touched my life made that life better than anyone could have hoped it to be.

Reading Ruminations by Ash
Ash Bishop PhD (Chair 1987-2007)

I joined the Reading Department in August 1976. I had been on the faculty of Indiana University for several years and, while it was an outstanding program and had a beautiful campus, the winter months quickly lost their charm. I interviewed at Fullerton while in Anaheim presenting at an International Reading Association annual conference. Before Sue and I headed back to Bloomington, Fullerton offered me an associate professor position with the Reading Department. We purchased a home in Irvine over one weekend – a frustrating experience as we were overbid on three houses before securing our current home. We sold our place in Bloomington for the then unheard of price of $31,900 (we wanted $32,000!) and headed to warmer climes and a home half the size and twice the price of our Indiana residence.

I left a faculty of eight men and one woman and became a member of a faculty consisting of 12 women. I was pleased that one other male joined the faculty when I did. However, as he had the tendency to return memos other faculty had written with perceived errors indicated in red ink, his tenure at the university was relatively short. I can still remember my first department retreat: twelve women and I heading to our meeting room with me last in line carrying two half-gallons of wine. I felt a certain degree of conspicuousness, especially as our retreat location catered primarily to members of religious institutions.

I joined a group of positive and enjoyable individuals. Because I had taught first grade for two years, it took me little time to adjust to working in environment where males were in a decided minority. I knew I was fully one of the group when another member of the faculty, she shall remain nameless, and I were walking down the hall discussing something of great importance to the field, perhaps the varied definitions of a diphthong, and she never broke stride as she followed me into the men’s restroom. We have both since recovered from the experience. Many of these early faculty members, Jane Balback, JoAnn Carter-Wells (whom I taught with all my 31 years at Fullerton), Toni (Maya) Chambers, Ann Coil, Mary Ellmann, Debbie Hancock, Jane Hopper, and Ruth May (Siegrist) were all exceptional women and all have a special place in my memories of Fullerton.

One of my most enjoyable early experiences was serving as faculty advisor of the Reading Graduate Student Council. I scheduled our first meeting at my home only to promptly forget that I had done so. When students started arriving Sue (my wife) indicated she was rapidly gaining a richer perspective of the absent-minded pro-
fessor concept. I also had the honor to serve as faculty advisor to the Reading Educators Guild, the first alumni association on campus. It has served as model for other alumni and provided amazing and continuous support to the department. Its contributions to the department have been, and I’m sure will continue to be, immeasurable.

Under the outstanding leadership of Debbie Hancock, the department quickly grew into the largest graduate reading program in the state and, I’m sure, one of the largest in the nation. At the same time, under the leadership of JoAnn Carter-Wells, our undergraduate program (a program directed toward general-education students) was flourishing, and we were able to hire several of our outstanding graduates to teach our undergraduate classes. One of the first was Kathi Bartle Angus, and she has come to provide long-term stability to both the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Debbie Hancock stepped out of the chair’s position in 1979 to become Dean of Education at CSU, Bakersfield—the first woman education dean of a CSU campus! Without missing a beat, Norma Inabinette stepped into the chair position. It was enjoyable watching Norma guide the department in an even-handed and consistently positive manner. Norma and I had offices right next to each other and, through the subsequent years, both challenging and positive, we addressed a variety of Department problems and enjoyed a greater variety of accomplishment.

During the 1982-83 academic year, I became Acting Associate Dean of the School of Human Development and Community Service. I certainly gained a rich university perspective, but quickly came to understand that university-level administration, while rewarding, did not have near the level of enjoyment as teaching graduate-level reading courses. Such sterling students, and current faculty, as Hallie and Ruth Yopp, Kathi Bartle Angus, JoAnne Greenbaum, Donna Padgett, Kim Norman and a multitude of others, many of whom went on to earn their doctorates, made walking into the classroom an always-positive experience. That said, grading papers never did generate the same level of enjoyment.

I assumed the chair position in 1987 and maintained it until my retirement in 2007, except for a two-year responsibility as Acting Dean of Fullerton’s brand new College of Education (2004-2006). Being asked to take the Acting Dean position was a vindication of the Reading Department and a thrill for me. It was always difficult for other departments in the university to understand what a reading program was about. That a faculty from the department could be asked to guide the College of Education through its founding years spoke volumes about the respect the Reading Department had gained.

As I look back on my 31 years with the Reading Department and, having moved from being the young guy on the 5th floor to someone other faculty turned to for historical perspectives, I have only positive memories. It wasn’t always easy, but it was always rewarding. And now with Ula Manzo serving as Department Chair, Rosie Ordonez Jasis and Kathi Bartle Angus coordinating the graduate and undergraduate programs respectively, JoAnn Carter-Wells assuming the historical perspective mantle, Janice Schroeder and Erica Bowers adding fresh insights, and with a truly amazing alumni association and over 3,000 alumni, I feel the Department is richly equipped to handle whatever challenges and literacy issues come its way. I’m sure the Reading Department’s future will be as bright as its past.

Faculty Footnotes
By Kathi Bartle Angus

A Clean Sweep! REG members may recall reading in earlier columns that the College of Education, including the Reading Department, was undergoing periodic review by both NCATE (National Council of Accreditation
of Teacher Education) and CTC (California Teacher Credentialing). Last November we were visited by teams from the accrediting bodies. Over 1000 interviews with students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community were conducted over a three day period. At the open meeting at the end of the visit the head of the team announced that the College of Education at CSUF had experienced the sporting equivalent of a “clean sweep.” All programs were recommended for full accreditation. In Reading we were particularly pleased with the strengths noted: enthusiastic candidates, a melding of theoretical and practical instruction, opportunities for growth as scholar-practioners, and candidates who were well prepared to take on leadership roles.

CSUF’s College of Education is still the only nationally accredited teacher preparation institution in Orange County. The Reading Department at CSUF is one of only three nationally accredited programs in all of southern California.

Many thanks go out to those of you who answered the call for interviews. The team was impressed by the strength and vibrancy of our alumni association.

Change in the Air! We are in the process of moving. The College of Education, long housed in the Education Classroom building on the main campus at Fullerton is moving to College Park located across Nutwood Ave. from the main entrance to the campus. Currently the Dean’s complex, Teacher Credentialing, Educational Leadership, and Reading are located on the fifth floor of the building. Secondary Education and Special Education are slated to join us in Fall 2008. Our mailing address has remained the same (PO Box 6868, Fullerton, CA, 92834). Plans to add classroom space and creation of a new Reading Center in the College Park building are in the works.

Dr. Ula Manzo has assumed duties of Chair for the Department of Reading. Dr. Manzo joined the faculty in 2000 and was awarded full professor status in 2007. Many of you recognize the name from texts you used in your graduate classes. Ula and her husband, Dr. Tony Manzo, have authored several popular texts used by graduate reading programs across the country. Her first major task was to move us successfully through accreditation and that certainly went well! We are looking forward to the next chapter of our distinguished and vibrant department.

Congratulations!

Donna Padgett has been named REG’s Alumna Volunteer of the Year. She will join President Gordon at a luncheon in the spring that will recognize the contribution of all university support group’s Volunteers of the Year. Donna has spent much time and effort creating special events for REG members for many years. We offer our heartiest congratulations

2008 Reading Department Scholarship Recipients

REG Scholarship Brooke Bismarck and Kristy Chia
Dorothy Klausner Scholarship Dalila Tirado and Karis Sweeton
Brenneman Memorial Scholarship Heather Bosworth
Lewis and Deborah Hancock Scholarship Kerry Graham
Celebrate CSUF 50th Anniversary by attending the REG Reunion Luncheon on March 1st at the beautiful Phoenix Club.

Registration and informational flyer enclosed in this packet. See former classmates and catch up on their lives. Call a friend from your graduation year and suggest a great afternoon’s entertainment. Dr. Ash Bishop, always a favorite of REG winter dinners will speak on the development of the reading program over the last fifty years. Don’t miss this great event!

REG Grant Applications Due

The Reading Educator’s Guild grant was established in 2004 to provide financial support to an REG member. The $300 grant is intended to be an adjunct to a typical classroom or professional materials budget. All applications must be submitted by May 1st 2008 to be considered for this funding. See the REG Website (readingeducatorsguild.org) for the application form and submission information.