



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

K-12 EDUCATION



MS. KATHLEEN F. ESMIOL

Kathleen (Hufford) Esmiol graduated from Florida State in 1960 and married her FSU sweetheart, Doyle Ruff, a decorated fighter pilot who was the first Vietnam returnee to the Air Force Academy and the Right Wing of the U.S. Thunderbirds during their 20 years together.

Returning from a final tour in Alaska with their three children, Kathleen received her M.A. from the University of Colorado in gifted education. During the 25 years she taught English in Colorado Springs' Academy District, she wrote and produced six plays and an opera. Prentice Hall named Kathleen Team Teacher of the West and used her play *Voices and Visions* as the basis of a national publication.

Kathleen was Disney's 2001 Middle School Humanities Teacher of the Year, and in October 2002, she taught American studies and English for the U.S. State Department in Blagoveschenck, Russia. Her play about an African-American woman who was the catalyst for the peaceful integration of Colorado Springs led to her writing *Everybody Welcome: A Memoir of Fannie Mae Duncan and the Cotton Club*. She currently is heading the effort to erect a bronze statue of Fannie Mae Duncan in front of the Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts and completing a biography of architect Elizabeth Wright Ingraham, Frank Lloyd Wright's granddaughter.