Name: Irma Guzman Wagner
Department: Educational Leadership
Academic Rank: Professor/Dean of Education
Year Retired: 2004
City of Residence: San José

Facebook Page or Website URL:

Birthplace: Ventura, California Birth Year: 1938

Marital Status: Divorced Spouse or Partner’s Name:

Children’s Names: Scott Timothy Wagner

No. of Grandchildren: 2 No. of Great Grandchildren:

Colleges or Universities Attended: Year Degree
San José State University 1961 B.A.
Claremont Graduate University 1976 M.A.
Claremont Graduate University 1976 Ph.D.

Teaching Experience: From To
CSU Stanislaus 1995 2004
San José State University 1986 1995
University of La Verne 1975 1986
Administrative, Business, or Professional Experience (other than teaching):
Chair, Department of School Management, University of La Verne
Associate Dean, College of Education, San José State University
Dean, College of Education, CSU Sanislaus

Selected Publications:

Personal Commentary (please limit comments to one page):
San José State College is where I earned a bachelor’s degree in Education in 1961. It’s where I had a wonderful time although I received “the worst grade ever” in a required class, “Issues in Education.” I challenged the grade with a deflating debate about what my nineteen-year-old self considered to be the truth and what my much-older professor knew to be an assumption unsupported by evidence. I remember writing that classrooms would look very different in the future because the children would be very different – they wouldn’t all look the same. I’m not sure how I arrived at that conclusion, or revelation, but I think I might have relied on a crystal ball when the term paper deadline came too close for comfort. I learned a good lesson from that humbling experience – spending more time in
Clark Library might be a wise thing to do. I persevered and, eventually, my ego and GPA were redeemed in other courses.

Twenty-five years after graduating from San José State, I returned as a faculty member in the College of Education and was assigned an office in Sweeney Hall around the corner from my long-gone “Issues” instructor. I never expected to return, especially in this capacity. Of course, the years since 1961 were filled with the kinds of experiences that so many Education faculty have in moving from a first job – mine in the Milpitas Unified School District – to a tenure-track position in a university. By 1986, San José State University had become one of the largest and most respected in the CSU system and I felt honored to be recruited and hired to teach in the Program of Educational Leadership and Higher Education.

In 1991, I went downstairs to the Dean’s Office where I served as Associate Dean, working with Dean Dolores Escobar, who continues to be my mentor and friend. San José State taught me a great deal, not just as a student, but as a faculty member and administrator. The skills I gained allowed me to serve as Dean of the College of Education at CSU Stanislaus for almost ten years. Since I had kept my house in Willow Glen while working in the Central Valley, I returned to it in 2004 when I retired. Since then, I have thoroughly enjoyed re-connecting with SJSU, my alma mater.

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