

Harrison County Community Foundation

Juan J. and Rudee Rodríguez Teacher Travel Endowment

Juan José Rodríguez Schwendener and Rudee Ann Rudd met at Murray State College in 1963. Juan José had come to Murray to study agronomy with the intention of returning to his home country, Guatemala, to eventually take over the family's land holdings in coffee, cattle, and hardwoods. Rudee Ann was in her second year at Murray, having graduated in three years, as Valedictorian, from Trigg County High School in the neighboring county.

Falling in love with each other at Murray was easy, and more than five years of courtship ensued. During this time each earned Bachelor's Degrees. She became a Graduate Fellow at Florida State University and then taught for two years. He completed his Master's Degree in Spanish Linguistics and Literature at Southern Illinois University, indicating a career change.

They were married on Flag Day, 1969. Juan José began the following day teaching to foreign language teachers for the National Defense Education Act at its summer institute at Murray State. In the fall of that year they were both hired in Louisville, Kentucky, teaching there for two years before moving to the jobs in Harrison County, Indiana, from which they retired in 2004.

Rudee Ann taught art in all grade levels, with the greatest number of years spent in the junior high classroom. She considers the CAPITALIZING DESIGNS QUILT PROJECT as the highlight of her thirty-seven years in education. Juan José was Foreign Languages Department Chairman and taught Spanish at Corydon for the duration of his years there, developing a highly successful program. In their early years at Corydon, both found fulfillment and gratification teaching evening classes at Indiana University Southeast.

Also in the beginning at Corydon, they took students on trips abroad. The responses from the students who benefited from these travel experiences, and from their parents, reinforced what Juan José and Rudee Ann already knew about the tremendous value of travel toward enlightening perspectives and becoming better citizens of the world.

Through the years, travel in Asia, Africa, Europe, North, Central, and South America continued to enrich their lives, broaden their view of the world, and strengthen their teaching.

Teaching at the junior high level is viewed by many, including Rudee Ann, as working with the most difficult age level of all. It is for this reason that their endowment is designed to reward experienced teachers who work with junior high students in the service of public education.

They consider it a better investment of their funds to enrich the cultural experiences of teachers, who can multiply those benefits throughout the years of their careers by affecting many more students than would be possible by anyone else in any other way.

As steadfast Association members, they designated the South Harrison Education Association exclusively to implement the endowment's provisions along with the foundation.



Church at the family's coffee farm,
Finca "La Viña,"
Palmira, Chuvá, Guatemala

Photographs beginning with upper right:
Summer Palace, Beijing, China, 1999
St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, England, 1995
Grand Canyon, Arizona, U.S.A. 2002

