

*Helen Finken devoted her life to teaching and learning in the area of social studies. She was a teacher, mentor, to students and teachers, and colleagues. She taught in the Iowa City Public Schools, served as Social Studies Coordinator for the district, served as an adjunct professor at Coe College and as an instructor at the University of Iowa. She was the Iowa Director for the National Consortium for Teaching about Asia. In this capacity, she taught workshops relating to China and Japan, and led study groups to China. She was Iowa coordinator for the National Geography Bee. Helen was both creative and skilled in the art of developing meaningful and challenging curriculum. She was energetically involved in many professional organizations and wrote educational materials for Newsweek. Helen seized every opportunity to learn, develop, and share. She appreciated the unique, and searched for the unknown and undiscovered. Helen was named Iowa Teacher of the Year by the state of Iowa. The Iowa Council of Social Studies awarded her the John Haefner award for outstanding teaching, continuous learning and exemplary service to the social studies profession. Helen's greatest contribution to her colleagues and her profession is the powerful example she set for how to live life to the fullest each day as a teacher, as a life-long learner and builder of positive, vibrant educational communities. One of the great joys in her life was to help students and teachers grow and develop. She created the support system and searched for the opportunities that would allow other teachers to become master teachers and effective leaders in the field of social studies.*