

OFHS



WALL OF FAME

Inducted May 29, 2011



RUTH BAST ZEMKE

Born in 1943 to Vic and Gerry Bast, Ruth was a true "War Baby." She grew up fast and was voted by OFHS Class of '61 as "Most Likely to Succeed." Reaching for that goal, she earned her bachelor's degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1966. Following her marriage to Wayne Zemke, she practiced as a Registered Occupational Therapist in varied clinical settings. Earning her PhD in 1978, Dr. Zemke began her academic career in the Dept. of Occupational Therapy at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Ruth, along with her husband and their son, David, moved to California in 1981, where she joined the faculty of the University of Southern California, the top occupational therapy program in the U.S. With her colleagues, she began developing a science providing a strong research evidence base for occupational therapy. Recipient of \$2 million in research grants, she has shared her results in over 70 journal articles and book chapters.

As the Director of Graduate Studies at USC she provided academic guidance for many Master's degree students and over 50 PhD students in Occupational Science who have gone on to lead Occupational Therapy programs and develop research across the US and internationally. Co-author of the first textbook in the field and international teacher and lecturer in the occupational science, Professor Zemke has provided inspiration to occupational therapists around the world.

One of Dr. Zemke's most exciting opportunities was the invitation from a graduate of her program (who became the Dean at Sapporo Medical University) to help Japanese occupational therapy educators develop the first Master's and PhD programs in Occupational Science in that country. For five years, while continuing leadership at USC, she also worked with SMU faculty and taught research and theory to graduate students, developing new leaders for occupational therapy research in Japan.

Dr. Zemke has been honored in her field with a number of recognitions including the UW-Madison Alumni Achievement Award, Fellow of the American Occupational Therapy Association, and the highest academic honor in her field—giving the Founder's Lectureship at the 2004 American Occupational Therapy Association National Conference. Ruth has given invited honorary lectures in many countries. The Society for the Study of Occupation research organization in America named its annual honorary lectureship, the "Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science".

Throughout all these years, Ruth (Bast) Zemke has been proud to introduce herself as a Midwesterner, from a town "up north" called Oconto Falls, Wisconsin, and a graduate of OFHS.