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The Dean Schneck Memorial Award for Distinction in Social Work Field Education Winner: Emeline Homonoff

Author(s)

Nicole Frankel, MSW

Production and Editorial Assistant

Fierce. Compassionate. Inspiring. Welcoming. Artful. Imaginative. Encouraging. Supportive. Joyful. A true visionary with the scholarship and sensitivity to back it up.

These are just a few of the words used to describe Emeline Homonoff, or Emmie as she is affectionately known, by her students, colleagues, and counterparts in field education throughout the country and beyond.

After dedicating over 25 years to social work field education, Emmie retired from the Simmons College School of Social Work at the end of the 2013–2014 academic year. The North American Network of Field Educators and Directors (NANFED) is honoring Emmie’s lifelong accomplishments with the first ever Dean Schneck Memorial Award for Distinction in Social Work Field Education. The award is named for Dean Schneck, Professor Emeritus and former director of field education at University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Social Work, who passed away in 2012. Dean was heavily involved in the creation of NANFED and his commitment to field education remains



unmatched. “With the announcement of Emmie’s retirement, we thought this was an important opportunity to recognize Emmie for her significant contributions as a social work field educator,” explained President and Treasurer of NANFED, Lisa Richardson. The award will be presented at the Heart of Social Work Award Reception at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting in Tampa, Florida.

Emmie is known as a champion of social work field education and has dedicated her career to helping field education establish and maintain a presence in the scholarly literature. Since 1994,

Emmie has regularly had articles and book chapters published about the necessity and challenges of field education. In fact, in 2008, Emmie had an article published in *The Clinical Supervisor* about past winners of NANFED's Heart of Social Work Award, analyzing the successes of these best practitioners of field education. It seems only fitting that Emmie should be honored by the very award ceremony that she helped gain attention and legitimacy.

In addition, Emmie has presented at conferences throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom on issues related to social work field education, including gatekeeping, failing students, addressing professional behavior, and teaching professional practice writing.

Master's level field placements in a family counseling center and at Massachusetts General Hospital prepared Emmie for her clinical career. Emmie simultaneously maintained a private practice, worked in various social services agencies, and supervised social work interns while earning her PhD at Boston College School of Social Work. Emmie then began her tenure as a professor in the field education sequence at Simmons. In this position, Emmie forever changed the lives of countless social work students as she guided entire generations through their field placements and courses.

The news of Emmie's retirement has been cause for bittersweet reflection among her students. As one recent advisee put it, "When Emmie informed me of her retirement, I couldn't help but to feel sorrow and to be grateful in the moment. Sorrow because there's no replacing Emmie. Her comforting nature is one-of-a-kind, and her support is unquestionable. Grateful, because the universe [had] structured a way for Emmie to cross my path. [...] Emmie, I will miss you dearly."

Her fellow field instructors have heralded Emmie as a kind and inspiring mentor and lamented that her friendly and encouraging presence will be missed. She has been credited with influencing many students', field instructors', and supervisors' decisions to write and publish scholarly articles on social work field education.

It was out of her and her colleagues' commitment to field education scholarship that the idea arose for an open-access and peer-reviewed journal solely about social work field education. And thus, the *Field Educator* was born. "Emmie is one of the founding editors and was involved from the beginning in discussions about the concept for the journal, the name, and creating the first editorial board," explained Suzanne Sankar, executive editor of the *Field Educator* and Interim Dean of Simmons College School of Social Work. Emmie's role in the creation and proliferation of the journal cannot be overstated, and as such, she has been named an editor emerita.

Jo Ann McFall, chair of the CSWE Council on Field Education, explained the importance of the *Field Educator* to the discipline: "The organization of the journal, the peer-review process, and the welcoming nature of the editors make it a pleasure to submit, review, and read the manuscripts made available through the journal. Emmie's knowledge, experience, and gentle hand clearly influence ev-

everything about the Field Educator. While the Field Educator is only a small segment of Emmie's contribution to social work and field education, it lifts her above and beyond the crowd of distinguished field educators."

We at the Field Educator congratulate Emmie on this award and wish her the best in her retirement. We will miss you, Emmie, and are forever grateful for your guidance, hard work, and inspired direction from day one of the journal's existence. We can only hope to make you proud in the years to come as the journal matures and grows in its quest to provide the scholarly support for social work field education that you envisioned.