Clemson Legacy Connection

PLANNED GIVING NEWSLETTER

CLEMSON forever | PLANNED GIVING

***Finding Joy* - Dr. Richard Pinckney M ’70, Ph.D. ’75 and Susan Pinckney ’71, August 2025**

Greetings, Tigers!

Recently, I read that finding joy is linked to a longer, healthier life. Studies consistently show that happiness contributes to better physical and mental well-being, making individuals more resilient to stress and less prone to illness. This positive impact stems from the way positive emotions affect the immune system, stress response and overall health.

The Pinckney Family Experienced Great Joy

This month, I’d like to share with you the story of how Richard Pinckney M ’70, Ph.D. ’75 and his wife, Susan Callison Pinckney ’71, learned that joy and happiness can be found in unexpected places. Their daughter, aptly named “Joy,” was born in 1978 with Down Syndrome.

“We had planned to name her ‘Allison’ as a nod to my maiden name [Callison],” Susan said. “But when Joy was born, our church minister, Ed Rose, shared that he believed that this child would bring us much joy. After his visit to the hospital, we chose the name ‘Joy’ as our daughter’s given name, using ‘Allison’ as her middle name,” she added.

Richard and Susan soon learned that their minister’s prediction was accurate. “Joy

impacted so many people with her enthusiasm, zest for life and happy outlook," Richard said. "I can't tell you how many times I was told over the years that we had given her a very appropriate name. She would light up any room she walked into, giving everyone hugs and big smiles," Susan said.

Joy and Hope

Jaycees Camp Hope in Clemson became an important part of Joy's life, and starting at age 12, she attended the camp for individuals with intellectual disabilities for 25 straight years. After her first year at the camp, Joy became the Camp Hope poster child, even riding in a parade with Senator Strom Thurmond in Edgefield, South Carolina.

Joy eventually became a role model for other campers at Camp Hope and provided encouragement and support to other camp attendees. "New campers would follow Joy's example, and her leadership was invaluable in helping new campers get off to a great start in their cabins," said Charlie White, former PRTM associate professor and former director of the CU Outdoor Laboratory, which hosts both the Jaycees Camp Hope and Camp Sertoma. "Joy had a beautiful personality, a sparkling smile and loved being at camp," he added.

A Clemson Fan Through and Through

Susan and Richard shared that Camp Hope and the Clemson Tigers were Joy's great passions in life. "She loved the social aspect of tailgating during football season and watching the Tigers on TV. She didn't fully understand the game of football, but she definitely knew what it meant to cheer for the Tigers," Susan said.

“I guess Joy’s love for Clemson came naturally, since that is where Richard and I met,” Susan went on to say. The couple began dating while Susan was pursuing her undergraduate teaching degree and Richard was working on his master’s degree in the late 1960s. “It was love at nearly first sight for me,” Richard said with a smile.

Through meal dates at Schilletter Dining Hall, the couple’s relationship grew, and they eventually married in 1970, living in married student housing while they worked to complete their degrees.

Upon her graduation, Susan taught second grade at an elementary school in Easley, South Carolina, carpooling from Clemson with several other graduate students’ wives. “I learned a lot from my fellow teachers on those car rides,” Susan recalled. “We shared a lot of classroom tips and tricks, and offered each other assistance and encouragement,” she added. “Our carpool fostered a great support network for all of us.”

A Growing Family and Career

In 1973, after completing his master’s degree and while working on his Ph.D., Richard took a teaching job at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. “I started out in the engineering program and moved over to the business program during my last year there. My systems engineering and applied math degree allowed the flexibility of cross-disciplinary teaching in several different departmental areas,” Richard said.

While living in Charlotte, Richard and Susan welcomed their first child, Matthew, into the world in 1975, the same year Richard received his Ph.D. from Clemson.

In 1977, Richard began teaching at Old Dominion University, and their daughter Joy was born in Norfolk, Virginia, in 1978.

Returning Home to South Carolina

Richard was offered the opportunity to return to South Carolina in 1980 to teach undergraduate business courses at Lander University, and he and

Susan were excited to have the chance to return home to where Susan had grown up. Their son, Ryan ’02, was born in 1980 in Greenwood.

“Teaching at Lander was a great experience,” Richard recalled. “I developed enduring friendships with colleagues and was able to publish a monthly economic report and other financial reports for Greenwood County, alongside a fellow professor,” he said.

Honoring Joy’s Legacy

When Richard and Susan describe their daughter Joy, who passed away in 2023, they are quick to mention her ability to connect with others. “Joy worked at Fazoli’s restaurant, Wesley Commons and the Burton Center Workshop, in addition to being a role model at Camp Hope. Her unique ability to encourage others served her well; in fact, she received a national employee of the year award from Fazoli’s in 2000,” Susan noted. “She made friends wherever she went,” Richard added.

When looking for ways to honor Joy’s legacy, Richard and Susan decided to establish an endowed scholarship in Joy’s name. The *Joy Allison Pinckney Memorial Scholarship Endowment* will support Clemson students majoring in Special Education. “As career educators ourselves, we understand the importance of supporting future educators. Setting up a scholarship endowment at a place that brought our daughter such joy and meant so much to both of us felt like the perfect way to honor her,” Susan said.

How Can You Honor Someone Special?

Like the Pinckneys, have you considered leaving a lasting legacy to honor a loved one and impact future students’ lives? There is much we cannot predict

about the future, but one thing is for certain: Clemson University will continue to attract students who can make a difference in this world. Let's help move future generations Fiercely *Forward* to shape our state, nation and world in ways that we can only begin to imagine. Your planned gift can open doors, create opportunities and ensure that meaningful relationships and lifelong learning thrive at Clemson for years to come.

To learn more about how you can honor someone dear to you and shape the future through planned giving, please visit our website or contact me directly at *jovanna@clemson.edu*. I would love for you to connect with our team of professionals who can help you navigate a potential current or future gift to enhance and support Clemson.

We also provide a variety of resources on our website for you to review as you navigate various opportunities that can be shared with your financial and legal advisors. There are numerous trusts and planned giving vehicles that can significantly benefit you and your family.

Wishing you the ability to find great joy, just as Richard and Susan experienced. May we all be beacons of light in the world, following Joy's beautiful example.

Ever Loyal and Forever Grateful,

JoVanna J. King

Senior Associate Vice President for Development