

CONSOLACION ("CONNIE") TENORIO KAUFER  
EDUCATOR



Connie Tenorio Kaufer was born June 12, 1945, on Saipan Island. She is the seventh of ten children born to Magdalena Arriola Tenorio and Lino Pangelinan Tenorio.

In September of 1952, Connie entered the first grade at Mount Carmel parochial school on Saipan Island. She and her classmates were the first class at Mount Carmel School, and 12 years later in 1964 she graduated from Mount Carmel High School. Connie's eldest sister, Trini, had been one of the group of young women chosen in 1947 to become teachers after the war. Two of Connie's older brothers were also teachers, so it was natural for her to think about becoming a teacher when she graduated from high school. From 1964 to 1966 Connie taught second grade at Chalan Kanoa (CK) Elementary School on Saipan.

In August, 1966, Connie was granted a scholarship by the Marianas Education Foundation to go to college in the U.S. From 1966 to 1968 Connie attended Chaffey College in Alta Loma, California, where she graduated with an A.A. degree in elementary education. In the fall of 1968, Connie began attending California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, California. At both Chaffey and Cal Poly Connie was an active member of the International Student Association. In 1970, she graduated from Cal Poly with a B.S. in language arts. Instead of returning immediately to Saipan, Connie chose to remain in California to do student teaching in the fall of 1970 at Chaparral Elementary School in Claremont. After 4 months of teaching first grade at Chaparral, Connie was awarded a California Standard Teaching Credential (Elementary) and became the first person from the Northern Marianas to return home with a stateside teaching certificate. Connie's aim upon graduation from college was to return to Saipan and help her people.

The day after stepping off the plane on Saipan, Connie was teaching a second grade class at CK Elementary School. During the fall of 1971 she

also taught a group of twelfth grade students at Marianas High School who were interested in becoming teachers. And from 1970 to 1972 Connie was the representative from the Northern Marianas on the Curriculum Council for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

In the summer of 1971, Connie was appointed Elementary School Supervisor for the schools of the Northern Mariana Islands, a position which she held for 3 years. During this time Connie actively assisted the first bilingual program in the Northern Mariana Islands. This experience later became the subject of her M.A. thesis. During the summer of 1973 Connie was the Cross-Cultural Coordinator for the Peace Corps' Orientation of Volunteers coming to serve in the Northern Marianas. And during the summer of 1975 she served as Chamorro Language Coordinator for the same program. In the fall of 1974 she requested and was granted permission to return to classroom teaching. Back at CK School she taught grades 3 and 4 for 2 years and served as secretary for the school's Parent Teacher Association. It was also during this time that Connie organized the Saipan Chapter of the International Reading Association and served 1 year as President of the local chapter. In the fall of 1976, she took a leave of absence to bear and care for her daughter, Lucile. However, she did find time to serve for a year as a member of the Trust Territory's Right to Read Council.

In the fall of 1979, when her daughter was old enough to attend preschool, Connie returned to education as the Acting Principal of Tanapag Elementary School on Saipan, a position which she held for 1 year. In the fall of 1980, she went back to CK School, where she taught third grade for 1 year, and first grade for 3 years. During each of those years she was granted a Certificate of Appreciation for outstanding performance.

During the 1980-81 school year, Connie served as Chairperson for the CK School Planning Committee, and during the following year she served as a member of the Teachers' Credentials Committee for the Northern Marianas. From 1981 to 1983 she served as President of the Teachers' Association for CK School, and for a year as chairperson of the CK Library Committee. In the 1982-83 school year Connie was selected as the "Employee of the Year" for CK School.

It was also during these years (1981-83) that Connie undertook graduate studies in a program presented on Saipan by professors from San Jose State University (California). While teaching full-time during the day, she attended classes 4 days a week for 3-1/2 hours in the evening during the school year, and full-time during the summer months. In 1983, San Jose State University awarded Connie an M.A. in education, "With Great Distinction."

Since 1984 Connie has served in the Central Office of the CNMI Department of Education as the Reading Specialist and as Project Director for the Comprehensive Language Skills Program (CLASP) in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Besides her work in teaching and educational administration, Connie has been an active member of her church. From 1964 to 1966 and again from 1971 to 1974 she served as Prefect (President) of the Sodality of Mary (a young women's Catholic organization). From 1980 to 1985 she recorded Scripture readings in her own native Chamorro for broadcasting over local radio every Saturday during the Chamorro Hour. In the 1983-84 school year she was Treasurer for the Mount Carmel (Catholic) School PTA, and the following year she was a member of the Board of Directors for Mount Carmel School. She is presently serving a 2-year term on the Diocesan Board of Education for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Chalan Kanoa (the Northern Mariana Islands).

Connie is married to Dr. Leonard J. Kaufer and has one child, Lucile.