

Remembering Ruth Harris

Ruth Harris, who dedicated her life and career to helping children with dyslexia, was brought into the field by the struggles of her son Charles, who was diagnosed in the 1960's. She began her studies by working with June Lyday Orton. Academia was no stranger to Ruth, who held degrees from Simmons College and Boston University, and later attended Greensboro College, The University of Richmond, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Ruth began tutoring other youngsters in the 1970's, and eventually joined Patricia De Orio at the Riverside School, helping to turn it into a premier school for the education of dyslexic children. Ruth was a Board Member of the Virginia Branch of the Orton Dyslexia Society, President of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, and a recipient of many prestigious awards in the field of education and dyslexia.

Ruth was elected to the board of the Academy of Orton Gillingham Practitioners and Educators in 2002 and began working diligently to establish our professional library. She, and her husband, Louis Harris, established a fund to ensure the continuity of the library, and a scholarship fund to support members with limited funds who wished to continue their Academy training by attending our conferences. The HARRISES also established scholarship funds at the Riverside School, and at Virginia Commonwealth University. It was a remarkable legacy from an exceptional couple.

A gentle and soft spoken woman, Ruth Harris will be remembered as a scholar, educator, and philanthropist, whose work on behalf of children with dyslexia will continue through the institutions she has supported and to the many, many students and teachers who are the beneficiaries of her training.