

TRIBUTE TO OUR DEAR FRIEND AND CO-FOUNDER

With heavy hearts, we share, with the few who may have missed our other postings, the sad news of Gale Hull's sudden passing on 16 October from an unexpected vascular event. And with much gratitude, we thank the many PID supporters and associates who have kindly made special donations in Gale's memory and who have extended their well wishes and sympathetic solidarity to PID's board and staff and, especially, to those who are also members of Gale's family.

For the hundreds of us who knew Gale and worked with her over the years, agreement resounds that she exuded an extraordinary character of compassion, competence, and commitment. Moreover, many would go as far as did one speaker at Gale's funeral who described Gale as the finest human being he had ever known. And we have all witnessed how Gale brought the ethos and force of that character to her work with Partners in Development. Such remarkable traits enabled Gale to help grow the organization from a community service center in Ipswich Massachusetts, which she cofounded with her husband James in 1973, to an international organization operating in four countries and annually transforming the lives of thousands through access to housing, medical care, education, and economic development.

Gale's effectiveness emerged neither from elite pedigree nor from wealthy connections, but, rather, from those qualities cited above, driven by her commitment to two operating principles, namely those of respect and adaptability. Gale's entire leadership approach, on both systemic and micro personal levels, reflected these two principles, which she wove into the entire ethical space and systemic protocols in which PID operates.

Regarding the former, Gale demanded of herself and those with whom she worked a respect for all categories of PID participants, beginning with those on the ground who struggle daily with poverty and oppression. The very compassion Gale modeled, as well as her singular commitment to keep serving at great personal cost, reflected Gale's underlying respect for the needs and contributions of all human beings and particularly those whom society exploits, marginalizes, or dismisses as collateral damage in the course of human progress. Not so for Gale as she managed in a tent for ten months following the great Haitian earthquake of 2010 or

when, just three weeks out from hip surgery, she hobbled through the airport, during a blizzard, dragging two cases of desperately needed medicine to Guatemala.

The drive to Gale's commitment transcended mere compassion or "feeling bad for those in need." Rather, she operated from radical respect for the equal worth of all people, including those whom the global economy relegates to the margins of non-profitability. Moreover, Gale's respect for the aspirations of those who partner with PID to transcend their oppressive structures demanded that all PID staff and programs affirm the special insights and contributions of those struggling individuals and their communities. Accordingly, PID's process for program development has always originated with the partnering communities identifying a priority of needs and formulating solutions, which reflect their unique cultural and structural dynamics.

Yet, for Gale, this fundamental protocol also required respecting the insights and contributions of those communities in implementing and administering PID programs on the ground. Hence, Gale celebrated the day, toward which she had worked persistently, to see all PID field directors and staff in Haiti, Guatemala, Peru, and the Mississippi Delta drawn from the very communities of struggle with whom PID partners---an extraordinary dynamic for an international NGO. Gale insisted on this policy to the extent that she would even turn down large grant offers if they even subtly pushed the project emphasis toward the donor's pet agenda, rather than respecting the expressed needs and solutional aspirations of the communities on the ground.

Yet, Gale's respect for all categories of PID participants extended to donors, as well, and in a way that Gale insisted dovetailed with those of PID's target beneficiaries. Accordingly, Gale aggressively respected donors' needs for integrity and transparency in how PID applied and managed funds and resources. Moreover, Gale instilled this ethic of respect on both macro and micro managerial levels. Hence, few administrative or program staff escaped the existential stewardship lecture. For example, if you bought a box of pencils at a dime a piece and could have got each at a nickel, you might sustain a gentle exposition on how the difference over time could have provided resources to admit another child into the emergency feeding program and

how PID's respect for donors included providing them an organization through which every penny given best served those needy communities for whom it was intended.

Yet, Gale's respect for donors never indexed to the size of their contributions. She greatly appreciated the few larger donors and representatives of foundations who gave generous amounts and for whom PID's mission and emphasis resonated. Thus, if you lived with her, you might have seen her up late preparing such donor proposals or progress reports with proper documentation, not because she thought she would otherwise lose the funding, but because she respected the time and needs of our friends who contribute from such positions.

Yet, no less so, did she respect the gifts of those hundreds of PID supporters faithfully giving more modest amounts simply from compassion for those who struggle in the areas in which PID operates and from trust in PID as a good steward of their giving. In fact, Gale celebrated these faithful donors as the backbone of PID support---those who over the years, often at personal inconvenience, persist in their child sponsorships or general support. Accordingly, she frequently took time from her relentless schedule to personally answer their PID questions or to take interest in their individual or family situations, with which she had become familiar through work trips or other PID settings. Hence, over the years, the number of names with background data that Gale maintained in her head, out of deep respect for the contributions of all donors, challenged anthropological theory setting cognitive limits on such social functionality.

Likewise, with PID volunteers and staff, Gale deeply respected the personal welfare and talents of each. Regarding the former, she refused to compromise safety protocols for work and travel in the field and stringently upheld special precautions during times such as Covid for all PID associates in the US and in the field. Gale's policy, which all PID operations reflect, stressed erring on the side of safety for all categories of PID participants even if it meant creating fiscal challenges for the organization with related stressors for herself.

Beyond safety concerns, Gale's respect for all PID workers informed her assessment of individual's interests and abilities in placing him or her in positions that would optimize both service effectiveness and personal fulfilment. Thus, travelers on PID service trips often expressed amazement at how quickly Gale could size up hidden potential and transform what

appeared to be a motley group into a cohesive team, drawing out the best in each. Accordingly, testimonies abound of how that individual respect transformed the lives of both US and national workers. Gale often would identify a talent that even the individual may not have recognized or for which no one had allowed opportunity to employ. Many such recipients of Gale's respect for the equality of all human worth have continued their work with PID for decades and have moved into positions of responsibility, service, and self-esteem that they could not have imagined years ago.

Gale's radical respect for all categories of PID participants complemented her second operational principle, namely that of organizational adaptability. Much of what presented as extraordinary competence in Gale's existential leadership of PID reflected her commitment to organizationally adapt and flourish in challenging situations. For example, when the political situation in Haiti grew difficult in 2005, Gale prudently restructured programs there while also opening another outreach in Guatemala. Likewise, when social justice dynamics encouraged a returned presence to the US (from PID's early roots on the Massachusetts North Shore) Gale initiated a PID site in the Mississippi Delta. And when Covid struck and threatened to undermine PID's entire efficiency in the US and abroad, Gale researched ways to introduce hybrid work models and creative communicative platforms that integrated US and national staff in ways that surpassed prior modes.

In each situation, and in countless others, Gale embraced organizational threats as opportunities to strengthen PID's operational dynamic, with constant focus on how to better partner with those who bear daily the burdens of ubiquitous poverty and deprivation. Consequently, Gale researched relevant literature, consulted with field and organizational specialists, prudently experimented with various models, and most of all, respectfully drew insights from all categories of PID associates, beginning with those most affected by PID programs and nearest to the ground.

However, as we reflect on Gale's unique qualities of compassion, competence, and commitment—shaped by operational principles of respect and adaptability---we must not miss what was perhaps Gale's greatest contribution to Partners in Development. Namely, Gale institutionalized those attributes into the very fiber, the organizational DNA of PID. From Board

of Directors to field ground crew, all operate within the ethical culture of universal respect for all PID participants, beginning with those from the destitute and marginalized regions in which PID operates and who constitute the very reason for PID's existence. Likewise, PID leadership, at all levels, from board and president to field directors, work within operational expectations of challenge and adaptability.

Such transformation of an entire organizational ethos represents Gale's greatest genius--to leave behind an organization that misses her dearly and grieves for her daily yet continues to flourish and remain faithful to its ideals and to its struggling friends in the communities of Haiti, Guatemala, Peru, and the Mississippi Delta. For this legacy, dear Gale, we thank you. But, oh, how we miss you.