

## Howard A. Berry (1932-2002): Four Tributes

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### **“You Only Get One Chance”**

In 1984, when The International Partnership for Service-Learning was in its infancy, Howard Berry was a full-time tenured professor at SUNY's Rockland College. I had just become President of the Association of Episcopal Colleges. He and I were acting as co-directors of The partnership and had just begun one of our first programs—in Jamaica. I visited the program, accompanying the first students, but could only stay a few days because of other obligations. Upon return, I called Howard to say that I thought we should give up this crazy dream of ours. “It isn't responsible,” I reported to him. “I needed to stay longer. If we cannot figure out how to do this full-time, we shouldn't be doing it at all.” A couple of weeks later Howard called me with the words, “I've done it. It's too late. Don't argue. The letter is already in the mail.”

“What letter? What have you done?” He had resigned from the college to give full torme to developing international service-learning. “But Howard,” I protested, “there is no money for salaries and no assurance that we can make a go of this.” He replied, “I know. But Linda, you only get one chance in your life to do something really valuable. This is my chance.” And so for the first year he worked without any salary at all, and there were some lean years to follow. But year by year the organization grew, programs were added and in April of 2002, we celebrated our 20th anniversary.

Howard was a visionary who was willing to put himself on the line for what he believed. He was a man of conviction and was prepared to and did act on those convictions, even when there was a price to pay. Since his death, I have received hundreds upon hundreds of messages of condolence from around the world. I knew him to be a man of compassion, but in those letters I have learned of many acts of kindness which he kept from me and others in life. He preached service-learning and he practiced what he preached. His vision and spirit will continue to inform the Partnership for Service-Learning. Ah, that all of us could have a professional friend,

## Howard Berry

colleague and collaborator of the depth and character of Howard Berry! I count myself truly privileged, truly blessed to have known and worked with him for so many years.

Linda Chisholm  
President,  
International Partnership for Service-Learning

## A Man of Vision, Passion

I was lucky enough not only to be Howard's employee but also his student.

When I was his student on the MA program in International Service Howard flew down to Jamaica, and stayed with us for the first few days as we got acquainted with our new world. He came back a couple of times to check on us and the program. Even though I barely knew him, his passion for Jamaica and the work that he was doing was dear.

After finishing the program I worked for The International Partnership for Service-Learning as the Director of Student Programs and learned from Howard what it took to produce such an extraordinary program. His commitment to the students and to the communities with which he worked dominated everything that he did. He lived his vision for education as a tool to help students and communities grow.

He brought a spark to the field of education and an incomparable perspective as a leader. I will always remember how much he liked to make people smile. He was quirky, with a sense of humor unlike any other.

He was my teacher, and I will miss him dearly.

Daina Stein  
Director of Student Programs,  
International Partnership for Service-Learning  
2000-2001

## **The Issue Was Learning**

Howard was one of the most creative people I've ever known. He also was one of the most exasperating people I've ever known. And that was part of his unique charm. Once, after I had left Rockland Community College, I had an ESL teacher who quit in the middle of the semester. I called Howard, hoping for a contact, for someone I could put in a classroom at 11 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Howard asked me if the issue was teaching or learning. If the issue was learning, then we could consider a plethora of alternatives: some mentored study, some native-speaking conversation partners, some independent study with learning contracts, some classroom instruction. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 11 was about boxes, not about options for learning. In the 20 years that I knew Howard, he did that again and again. So many times I'd say, "Howard, I don't know whether to do A or B." And he would answer, "What about 5?" I think my brain is bigger because I knew Howard, and for that I will always be grateful.

Martha Merrill  
Visiting Scholar, Indiana University

## **A Mentor, Leader, Friend**

Like many, Howard's passing profoundly touched me. I worked with the Partnership in 1996-1997 as the Coordinator of Student Programs. I was young, fresh out of college, and wanting to make a difference. My work with Linda and Howard is some of the most rewarding and powerful I have ever done. Howard was not a boss—he was a mentor, a leader, a friend. Of all the things I learned from Howard perhaps the greatest was that carrying a passion deep within your heart translates into success and happiness. It did for him and for every life he touched.

Christopher Allieri