

Peter Hursh

Bob asked me to describe Peter Hursh's contribution to ASSIST. No easy task given Peter's great talent, extraordinary intelligence, verbal skills, and broad range of experience in independent schools, international education, and corporate and nonprofit governance.

I believe Peter's greatest contribution to ASSIST was his ability to bring the best of the corporate world to our nonprofit board. Peter gave me William Bowen's book, *Inside the Boardroom*, which argues that corporate boards have much to learn from not-for-profit practices, and nonprofits could benefit from learning from the corporate boardroom. Bill Bowen, who has served on six nonprofit boards, including Princeton and the Smithsonian as well as many large corporate boards—American Express, Merck, and NCR to name a few, understood well the balance. Peter Hursh brought that same understanding and expertise to ASSIST.

We first saw Peter the leader when he facilitated our strategic planning session in June 2004 at Robin and Peter's home in Pacific Palisades. Peter not only facilitated the meeting, he spent tireless hours writing the plan and leading us in implementing the plan that he coined "measured growth." Peter provided each member of our Board a copy of "Good to Great—and the social sectors." Although Jim Collins is not usually an educator's favorite writer, Peter was successful in teaching us which business practices apply to us, and we are the better for it. Peter introduced us to our new friend, the hedgehog. As we look through our ASSIST files, we are reminded that Peter kept diligent track of our strategic initiatives, and gave us written summaries from every meeting that have kept us on track meeting our strategic goals that will serve us for many years to come.

So, Peter's legacy is that of a leading Director who made us all better, and reminded us that if our mission is good, we should hope to increase our reach. We will also remember most fondly Peter's smile and sense of humor. Only Peter could compare an endowment portfolio to filet mignon in the freezer. Only Peter could get off the red eye from Los Angeles and be eager to engage us as friends and professionals. He cared about internationalism—learned firsthand as an AFS student and later as an ASSIST host parent—but he cared about it because he cared about people—all people.

Andrew Wooden
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