

Legacy of Leadership Award



The White House Fellows Foundation and Association 2009 John W. Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award

is presented to

Harold A. Richman

White House Fellow 1965-66

Harold A. Richman exemplified John Gardner's charge to all White House Fellows to commit to a lifetime of public service, return to our communities as agents of change and renewal, and help strengthen the White House Fellows program.

Leadership: Harold Richman was the leader-as-follower who answered John Gardner's challenge to find solutions to those "great opportunities" brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems. He did that by using research-based policy as the tool for change. His style was that of a quiet leader, always chosen to lead groups because of his inclusive and supportive approach. Harold chose a lifelong focus on the welfare of children and devoted himself to the pursuit of it even though it offered neither riches nor front-page attention. For over four decades, he led in areas in which most people do not even engage ... foster care reform, community and youth development in America's inner-cities, and meaningful engagement among youth in war-torn countries. In every summary of Harold's career, the word "pioneer" appears. He was a pioneer in advancing social justice and founded and built institutions that matter to people -- vulnerable people in particular.

Professional Achievement: Harold Richman's professional achievements personified his dedication to public service. In 1969, as the youngest named professor on the faculty, Harold was appointed Dean of the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago. He took both the School of Social Service Administration and the Committee on Public Policy Studies (now the Harris School of Public Policy Studies) and turned them into schools that have influenced evidence-based public policy and practice through the research and teaching of their faculties. Harold then took Chapin Hall, a century-old inefficient and outdated child welfare service agency, and transformed it into an international engine for change in the world of child welfare policy across four continents, traveling regularly to other countries to help out, even when his declining health made those trips extremely difficult. By working with public and private groups in this country and with the governments of Israel, Jordan, and South Africa he redefined public service to children in those countries. In short, Harold's leadership of Chapin Hall for sixteen years firmly established an institution that will inform and transform public service for vast numbers of children throughout the world for years to come.

Harold authored numerous seminal publications in the field of children's policy and was active on boards of directors throughout the world. He was chair of the Center for the Study of Social Policy in Washington, D.C.; Chair of the Children's Institute at the University of Cape Town; and co-chair of the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change. He also served on the boards of the John Gardner Center at Stanford University; the Michael Reese Health Trust in Chicago; After School Matters in Chicago; the Interfaith Youth Core in Chicago; the Information and Research Center of the King Hussein Foundation in Amman, Jordan; the Brookdale Center on Children and Youth in Jerusalem; and the SEED Foundation in Washington, D.C.

Support for the WHF Program: Harold's enduring commitment to the White House Fellows Program was exceptional. It included serving on the Chicago Regional Selection Panel for a number of years and regular counseling of promising individuals whom he believed would be good candidates for the White House Fellows Program. He consistently provided valuable advice to Fellows as they served and exited the program and was always there to mentor, help with a job search, serve as a sounding board on a family matter, or advise on a policy issue. He did so without fanfare, never taking credit for the results. Harold's influence on the careers and public service contributions of White House Fellows dates from his own Fellowship in 1965-1966 and continues to this day.

Harold Richman's life was the quintessential definition of public service and was characterized by quiet effectiveness and unsurpassed grace. The White House Fellows Foundation and Association is delighted and proud to honor Harold A. Richman with the 2009 John W. Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award.