

NEWS

Stevens E. Brooks, Executive Director Emeritus, Dies at 68

7 JUNE 2010

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Stevens E. Brooks. Steve, who served The Philadelphia Center from 1968 until 2007, passed away Thursday, June 3, after a brief illness. He was 68.

Steve joined The Philadelphia Center in 1968, only one year after the program was founded by the Great Lakes Colleges Association. He held the position of Director of Education until 1973, when he was appointed Executive Director. Steve retired in 2007.

The program flourished during Steve's tenure. In an interview conducted in 2007, Steve said that The Philadelphia Center originally appealed to politically engaged students interested in acting as "agents of change" and to those who wanted to "affect society in positive ways." His dedication to the program and his passion for experiential education, teaching, and the city of Philadelphia made a tremendous impact on the thousands of students who have attended the program throughout the years.

In 2005, Steve was honored by the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) with their Pioneer of the Year award. The award recognized Steve's life-long commitment and his significant contributions to the field. He also received the Distinguished Service Award from Hope College (The Philadelphia Center's managing institution), The Philadelphia Center Alumni Appreciation Award, and the NSEE Board Service Award.

Additionally, Steve was a founding member of Council for Adult Experiential Learning, the Society for Field Experience Education (which later became the NSEE), and the Council of University Institutes for Urban Affairs. Widely considered an expert in experiential education, he presented numerous papers on the topic and was a consultant for Learning From Experience Trust, a London-based organization. He also edited the book, *Enriching the Liberal Arts Through Experiential Education*, which was published in 1979. He also volunteered and taught classes at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Steve was born in Philadelphia on April 1, 1942. He is survived by his wife Krail and their son Reed. A memorial celebration of Steve's life will be held on June 15, at 5:00 PM at Valley Green in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia. Condolences may be sent to the family, care of The Philadelphia Center. As a philanthropist, art-lover, and avid gardener, Steve's wishes were that friends and family who wish to make a donation in his memory would plant a tree or make a contribution to the organization of their choice.