

## **Board Leadership – Education-Related**

Overview: *Long-time member of various boards, President of boards and legal advisor.*

While at Dartmouth, I was involved in nothing that could in any way be characterized as community service. It wasn't until I joined the Board of an independent school shortly after graduation (as alumni representative) that I learned how rewarding it could be to contribute to the wellbeing of others, and as a result to my own self-development and personal growth. Since that initial experience, I have always been involved in community service of one form or another, and usually on more than one front at a time, all of it being education-related in some way.

I believe that I was able to help ensure the long-term viability of the organizations with which I have been associated, all of these varied institutions still being in existence and contributing to the welfare of their communities.

Financial independence of these organizations, particularly the non-academic ones, has been difficult to come by. One of the reasons for this is the difficulty in identifying the appropriate donors. There is a great deal of money available in the donor community and that is looking for a home. But matching the donor with the donee is sometimes difficult unless professionals are involved. And that is not necessarily a guarantee of anything, other than significant fees and often not much to show for them.

Persistence, talented and well-motivated people working together for the common good, and a worthy cause are a key to success. There are many worthy causes, but sometimes not as many committed and qualified people to lead and support them. Money and people are needed, although sometimes a few good persons can do a lot with very little. Regular and frequent communication among participants will at least ensure that common goals and strategies are understood.

The whole is greater than the sum of the parts, particularly when the parts are working at cross-purposes or totally independent of each other.

Helping your community, in whatever capacity, can be life-affirming for anyone. Try it. You might find that you like it. And, as in my case, I can promise that you will often, if not always, get more out of this type of activity than you actually put into it.

- **Ken Salomon**
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