

Memorial Resolution on behalf of
Gary Bruce MacDonald
Administrative Assistant and Community Leader and Activist
April 17, 1950- October 18, 2014

The IUPUI and Indianapolis community was profoundly saddened by, and mourns the loss of, Gary Bruce MacDonald who passed away on October 18, 2014.

Born in Spokane, WA on April 17, 1950, Gary's gifts were so many that he could and did change careers and interests many times in his life. Since January 2011, Gary MacDonald served as the administrative assistant in the IUPUI Office of External Affairs and was a friend to all of us during his time at IUPUI. He managed database projects, special events, and generated proposals and documents for the campus over the past three years with confidence, diplomacy, sensitivity, and diligence.

Gary attended Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington (1968-71). Among his impressive achievements was the publication of his book Five Experimental Colleges when he was only 23 years old. In the years to follow, Fairhaven College invited him to speak and named him its first Distinguished Alumni Fellow because of his AIDS advocacy and international work.

After college, he was admitted to Columbia School of Journalism in New York City, but by then had decided to become a diplomat. He and 25,000 others started the rigorous application process that year. Only Gary and 12 others were selected. All but Gary had advanced degrees from prestigious universities.

In August 1976, he was appointed to be a Foreign Service Officer by President Ford and Henry Kissinger and was confirmed by the Senate. He completed training to become a Foreign Service Information Officer and served in Rabat, Morocco (1977), and in Damascus, Syria (1978-82). Upon return to Washington, D.C. he coordinated the educational exchanges, including the Fulbright Program, at the U.S. Information Agency.

When Gary was on home leave from his post at the embassy in Damascus in 1984, the AIDS crisis exploded in the U.S. During the earliest days of the AIDS epidemic, Gary volunteered with the D.C. advocacy groups and established the AIDS Action Council in 1985 where he began having an impact on U.S. AIDS policy. He became a leader at the Academy for Educational Development in international AIDS action and network development, including the establishment of organizations in Africa and Asia.

Gary was awarded the Harvey Milk Award for Public Advocacy in 1986, and at that ceremony, Surgeon General Koop once said that "Gary was single-handedly responsible for getting me to stop talking about high risk groups of people and start talking about high risk behavior."

Gary moved to Indianapolis in 1994 and was a major supporter of the AIDS Youth League which was then in its formative years. He volunteered for numerous community organizations including Meals on Wheels and supported the arts. He himself was also a talented artist, calligrapher, poet, singer, violin, and viola player.

Last January Gary was diagnosed with stage four lung and bone cancer. He was pleased with the outstanding care and treatments that he received at the IU Simon Cancer Center and with IU Health Hospice. A memorial service was held at the Ruth Lilly Learning Center Auditorium, Riley Outpatient Center on Thursday, December 18, and was broadcast to friends and family across the country through the help of many friends and colleagues at IUPUI.

Gary is survived by his sister, Lee Ann Bourcier, of Portland, Oregon; brother, Glenn MacDonald and wife, Amy (Hanson) and their son, Galen, of Sand Point, Idaho; as well as his adopted families, Pat and Melissa Biddinger and Ajmir and Amrik Singh.

Through his work at the university and in the community, Gary expanded his family and thus leaves numerous

dear friends whom he also regarded – and who regarded him – as family.

THUS, BE IT RESOLVED that this memorial resolution be placed in the minutes of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis Staff Council with a moment of silence observed his in honor.

Prepared and submitted by Jennifer L. Pease, former IUPUI Staff Council member and colleague.

Adopted by the IUPUI Staff council at their meeting on January 21, 2015.