



Focus on the Future

Guest Predictions: Judy Hanley

Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions questions that affect us all.

***Judith Hanley, Ph.D.** is the Director of the Loudoun Child Advocacy Center. She is also the Chair of the Loudoun Human Services Network. She earned her doctorate in child development, with an emphasis on research. Prior to her position with the Child Advocacy Center, Dr. Hanley was the Vice President of U.S. Program for INMED Partnerships for Children. In this position, she directed the MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun program. Dr. Hanley has a strong background in child development, child abuse and neglect, as well as monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of programs. She maintains a broad network of academic, professional and community contacts through active membership in area coalitions and local associations, including graduating from Leadership Loudoun, Class of 2004. She also serves on the board of Loudoun Cares.*

Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?

A: The internet: Making it easier to communicate and find resources. While the internet has been with us for years, everything we do seems to have accelerated. We learn from others almost immediately and see how others are solving problems that might have stopped us earlier. By example: finding available resources for the homeless in our areas. Additionally there is a new sense of active collaboration through the internet that I personally find to be more than encouraging.

Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?

A: Problems within the economy have shown nonprofits that we need to do a much better job educating in order to continue to fulfill our missions. For too long we have taken it for granted that the community understands the impact of what we do. Now, at a time when we are struggling to serve more people with fewer resources, we are challenged to educate the leadership of the community as to the ability of nonprofits to make a real difference. We find that creating a solid understanding is so much more difficult in today's financial climate than it was a few years ago.

Q: How will globalization affect your professional area in the near term?

A: Nonprofits are reaching every part of the globe with services to improve quality of life. Therefore, I believe it will not just be the emergence of India and China but countries across the globe will be prospering due to globalization.

Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?

A: Going forward we need to do a better job educating policy makers, business leaders, government officials and others as to the benefits nonprofits provide to communities. Nonprofits provide cost savings to society. A great example of that is when residents use the community based health center rather than the emergency room. Nonprofits also have a multiplying effect by leveraging public and private funds. However, nonprofits "return on investment" runs deeper than just finances. Nonprofits strengthen the community by being part of the "safety net" and connect people to each other and to resources. Our message must also put a face to our neighbors in need, showing that people representing all income levels, all races, and all ages are recipients of nonprofit services.

Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?

A: With so many experienced, educated individuals out of work, many young people are finding it impossible to compete for a shrinking pool of available jobs when other more experienced people are willing to take the positions for the same pay grade. In order to be successful, young people today must think about doing business in a global environment as opposed to the more traditional ways.