

## Stewardship Circle: Facilitator biographies

### Bruce Anderson

Bruce Anderson is a nationally recognized speaker, community activist and leadership coach. Equally at home in remote villages and urban communities, he is known for blending old stories and wisdom, along with modern organizing strategies, into the asset-based community development and social service innovation work he is so passionate about.

Bruce Anderson went to Alaska the day he finished college in 1973 and didn't look back for 20 years. During that time, he was a schoolteacher, fisherman and mayor. One day he got off the boat and went into a social service agency to volunteer, and got hooked by the idea of who was welcome in his community and who was not.

Moving back to Washington in the early '90s, he started Community Activators with his wife, Gina. Community Activators works on three ABCD areas. First, the group refines the distinctions between skills, talents and gifts, developing tools and talking with people about the importance of making those distinctions. Second, Community Activators looks for opportunities to talk about creating welcoming groups, whether that's in a church, social service agency or other community place. Third, the group is blending the explosion of neuroscience and optimism research with the practices of community ritual, and building a usable model for creating and sustaining a hopeful group of any kind.

### Sally Byng

Sally Byng is Chief Executive of Barnwood Trust.

"I grew up surrounded by passionate campaigning about disability rights, which formed part of my DNA. The Disablement Income Group, the first disability rights organisation in the UK, had just been formed and my mother was an advocate for them.

Leaving school I had no idea what I wanted to do so I spent a gap year working in a hospice in South London. There I was taught two huge lessons by Kathy, who couldn't move at all, speak or feed herself. Firstly she taught me that everyone has something to contribute: she had the biggest sense of fun and playfulness, if only you took time to see it. Secondly she taught me that it takes two to create a disability: she had an impairment, but I disabled her by being frightened of that impairment so I didn't take the time to see her for who she was. She gently and patiently showed me what I was doing to her. Through the 40 years since then I've worked in a variety of sectors and roles, gaining along the way a PhD, a professorship and an OBE, all of which I've used to follow my personal goal: to contribute to making a world where, no matter what, everyone is valued, respected and included.

I feel very honoured to have been made a Deputy Lieutenant of the county of Gloucestershire, through which I look forward to serving the communities of the county.

The strengths I bring to the team at Barnwood are stamina, persistence and an appetite for the challenging."

## Tom Dewar

Tom Dewar currently lives in Baltimore, Maryland, and is the co-director of the Aspen Institute's Roundtable on Community Change. Before returning to the United States last year, he taught international and community development through the School for Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University (2001-2007), in Bologna, Italy; and he worked with a range of community and international development projects – focusing on the challenges of community organizing, organizational effectiveness and evaluation.

As a long-time member of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute, he has helped train community leaders and organizers from across the United States and Canada, as well as in Australia and Southeastern Europe. Most recently he has helped direct an annual Youth Organizing Institute for teams of young people from across the Balkans, worked with a range of immigrant organizing projects in Europe, and helped some new community foundations across Eastern and Central Europe get started.

Prior to work at the MacArthur Foundation (1998-2000), he was senior project associate at Rainbow Research in Minneapolis (1991-1997), where he worked with a variety of community-driven initiatives, non-profit organizations and community foundations across the United States to improve their effectiveness and impact. Before Rainbow, he was a faculty member of the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, where he taught and conducted action research (1974-1990).

His teaching, research, writing and public speaking have addressed a variety of topics, including especially the key challenges in community development, the role of mutual aid and informal networks in community building, the social and economic organization of neighbourhoods, and the dangers of an over-reliance on professional service delivery systems. He has led numerous evaluations that have focused on these topics, as well as on efforts to re-integrate formerly institutionalized (and other labelled) people into local communities, provide employment and income for lower skilled and less experienced workers, improve the integration of school and work, carry out peace-making and conflict mediation, strengthen sustainable agriculture, and promote strong community organizing.

## Michael Kendrick

Michael Kendrick is currently an independent international consultant in human services and community work with a focus on work in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom as well as occasionally in other countries, e.g. Nicaragua, Honduras, Ireland, and Belgium etc.

His interests, involvements and writings have included leadership, service quality, the creation of safeguards for vulnerable persons, social integration, change, innovation, values, advocacy, the role of individual persons and small groups in creating advances, evaluation, alternatives to bureaucracy, personalized approaches to supporting people, and reform in the human service field amongst others.

He has most consistently worked in the disability, mental health and aged care fields for nearly thirty years but has also occasionally worked in areas such as drug abuse, child protection and community education. In this work he has occupied a variety of roles including being the Assistant Commissioner for Program Development with the Massachusetts government, the Director for the Institute for Leadership and Community Development and the Director of the Safeguards Project. He is very active as public speaker and trainer as well as evaluator, consultant, and advisor to advocates, governments, agencies and community groups.

His masters and doctoral work was in social work and sociology. He regularly teaches at various universities both here and abroad as time allows. He also writes quite extensively and his publications are available upon request. He resides in Massachusetts.

## Cormac Russell

Cormac is Managing Director of Nurture Development and a faculty member of the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute at Northwestern University, Chicago. He has trained communities, agencies, NGOs and governments in ABCD and other strengths based approaches in Kenya, Southern Sudan, South Africa, the UK, Ireland, Canada and Australia.

In January 2011 Cormac was appointed to the Expert Reference Group on Community Organising and Communities First, by Nick Hurd MP, Minister for Civil Society in the UK.

Some current/recent examples of his national and international work include the following:

- Leading all national sporting organisations in Canada, in conjunction with the Canadian Council for Ethics in Sport, to adopt a shared vision as to how sport can become an asset for community building. This is effecting significant changes in the structures of major sporting organisations but also at a local community level in terms of community empowerment and citizen driven development.
- Working closely with I&Dea in the UK, advising them on the development of an asset based approach to health and on addressing health inequalities in low income communities. Advising on their ground breaking report: The Glass Half Full: how an assets approach can improve community health and well being.

- Leading out a national programme in partnership with Youth Work Ireland in promoting a strengths based approach to working with young people. This will involve hundreds of youth practitioners and thousands of young citizens, leading to the development of a strong culture of youth led initiatives.
- Working in partnership with the University of Limerick and Atlantic Philanthropies in Ireland to infuse an ABCD approach across the entire city of Limerick. Part of this process involved organising an entire neighbourhood to address issues of loneliness, fear and intimidation and to support citizen driven development. The long-term vision is of a city that puts citizens and communities in the driving seat, through processes of neighbourhood organising and bottom up planning and where services are organised in the way in which community is organised. This aligns closely to the Seattle model.
- On-going adviser to Dublin City Council on the implementation of the Council's Community Development and Neighbourhood Revitalisation Strategy.
- He sits on the Health Empowerment Leverage Project steering group, which was commissioned by the Department of Health (UK) this year to demonstrate the business case for wider use of community-based methods of health improvement.

Cormac holds degrees in philosophy and psychology and is also an accredited civil and commercial mediator with the ADR group. He uses these and other skills and processes including World Café, Appreciative Inquiry and Open Space Technology alongside strength based thinking to support those with whom he works to move towards inclusive, actionable change.