

Citation for Joe Brockington by Margaret Wiedenhoedt

Throughout his twenty-plus years in international education, Joe Brockington consistently contributed to and advocated for The Standards of Good Practice for education abroad, mentoring colleagues at institutions on how to develop and provide programs incorporating The Forum's Standards that met curricular goals while also fully supporting students. His contributions to the research of the development of the profession of international education helped to create recognition of the increasing professionalization of our work while acknowledging how much the field has changed. Throughout his career, Joe never missed an opportunity to remind colleagues that having standards was so important because, as he would say in his very Midwestern, dry, humorous tone, "that next to parenting, education abroad is the world's greatest amateur sport."

Joe's own story began with his being transformed by his study abroad experience after high school, or how he described it, "being packed up and shipped off to West Germany by my mom at age 16". This experience became a career direction that included several years as a faculty member in German, followed by his leadership of the Center for International Programs at Kalamazoo College. He fully embraced the ideal of providing students with a significant learning experience in another culture as part of their liberal arts education while also understanding how complex and challenging it could be to run programs that allow students to have such learning experiences.

As a founding member of The Forum, Joe recognized the need for the development of professional standards, data collection, and research across the field of international education and that it would take a new organization to create and endorse such projects. In November of 2000 Joe shared a list of potential education abroad projects and issues which many in the field had been discussing to determine which of these were already being addressed or could be addressed by a new organization focused on education abroad. The list included over 20 items and many resonate with us today:

- Underrepresented groups (publications, materials, workshops, training)
- Funding
- Accreditation/certification of programs/institutions
- Health/Safety publications, materials, training, certification, crisis response
- Data collection--(student/ program/institutional/type/professional)
- Content training for workshop leaders/presenters
- Advocacy (campus/state, regional, national, transnational)
- Outcomes assessment (agreement on set & research to validate)
- Reentry, articulation, integration
- Technology and education abroad
- Enforcement of standards and professional/ethical practice
- Peer reviewed articles/books/publications
- Program evaluation/review methodologies
- Internationalization of institutions beyond student experiences in study abroad
- the profession of education abroad

In 2007 Joe, along with several colleagues, published “Pathways to the Profession,” one of the first studies in the field investigating the backgrounds and professional development paths for careers in international education. This research contributed significantly to the recognition of increasing professionalization in the field of international education and provided a foundation for further advocacy for recognizing the unique qualities, characteristics, and job responsibilities of international educators. This information helped us all better understand the profession and to recognize the profound changes in the nature of our work. This report became the foundation for additional research and development of tools to advocate for recognition and support for our advocacy for institutional resources in the field of international education.

His work on risk management, understanding the legal context of study abroad, and the relevance of health and safety issues began at a time when faculty were barely trained to lead students and preparation for health and safety of students abroad would include information on immunizations and copies of health histories. He advocated strongly for standards, training, and certification in areas of health and safety, crisis response, and risk management. This work helped improve preparation and oversight for education abroad and also demonstrated how the Standards may be used effectively when working with colleagues – Deans, Provosts, or Presidents in the Academy. In essence, helping education abroad offices not only learn about best practices, but also how to talk to their administration and faculty about why best practices are necessary. Like many areas in his life where he took the issues seriously but not himself, Joe would describe the underpinnings of this work by reminding us in print “... ultimately, the health, safety, and often security, of an individual participants rests in the decision making power of a 20-year old – something that, as anyone who has worked with college-age young people knows, can vary greatly from student to student” or as he was more apt to say it in person, “Nobody in this field should ever sleep easily at night. Our future depends on the judgment of twenty year olds.”

Joe always said that working in education abroad was more like an apprenticeship than something you could earn only via a graduate degree – he believed in the importance of mentoring and reaching out to next generations in the field.

He was always willing to serve as a sounding board for ideas or a sympathetic listener to challenges we all face as professionals. As a colleague remembered Joe, “He was a giant in the field and a source of knowledge and inspiration. I loved his droll sense of humor and sly wit. He always had a way of putting everything in perspective. Even though his knowledge and experience put him ahead of most of us, he approached everyone as an equal and generously shared his insights and his time.”

Joe was a prolific presenter and publisher, presenting at least two to four presentations per year on topics focused on a variety of subjects, including health and safety, promoting diversity in study abroad participation, and curricular design and integration as well as writing at least 2-3 chapters or articles per year. Joe Brockington both practiced and preached, with a twinkle in his eye and a sense of humor and energy that isn’t easily matched, on the importance of The Forum Standards. His contributions to the profession in the areas of health and safety, risk management, and understanding the profession of international education have benefited the field and his impact will continue for many years to come. He was also a great boss, dear colleague and friend to those of us who were lucky enough to work with him. Since his passing

last August, we have realized how fortunate we were to work and learn with him over the years. As recognition of his significant work supporting international education and in particular his advocacy for the Standards, I am proud to recognize him as the recipient of the 2016 Peter A. Wollitzer Advocacy Award.

Accepting on behalf of Joe is his wife Cathy Brockington, and sons Dave, Sam and Drew.