

From the Editors' Desk: Remembering Harry Knowles



C. Harry Knowles, who passed recently, leaves behind a tremendous legacy: the work of the Knowles Teacher Initiative and hundreds of novice math and science teachers well-equipped and well-supported to teach America's children.

Harry (as we all knew and addressed him) became wildly successful through engineering and invention. The hand-held barcode scanner? That's him. When he turned his mind to philanthropy, Harry recognized that his successes could be attributed to his high school math and science teachers. Until the very end of his life, Harry devoted his energy and considerable resources to facilitating the support and development of early-career teachers and empowering experienced education professionals to build programming and make decisions about the best way to realize his vision.

Harry had a specific vision for improving math and science education, and because he trusted in the professional knowledge of teachers and the Knowles staff, the organization has been able to grow from that original vision into something that exceeded his expectations.

Not all philanthropists are able to operate their foundations that way. And, in education, trusting the capacity and knowledge of trained professionals is

exceedingly rare. That stance is surely what has made the Knowles Teacher Initiative so successful in striving towards its mission. Harry was a learner, through and through, and was thrilled with the work of *Kaleidoscope* as we celebrated and showcased the learning of teachers.

Harry recognized the complexity of the teaching profession and noted the ‘depth of both thinking and dedication’ present in our teachers’ stories.

We, in turn, are thrilled to bring the stories in this issue to you. From a math educator in California whose classroom positions students as experts, to a trans teacher in New York who illuminates the parallels between the importance of coming out to his students and his efforts to use anti-racist practices in his classroom, to an educator whose identity as a refugee changes how she sees conflict in schools, we hear stories from unique perspectives that enrich and widen our understanding of schools, students, and the ways that teachers are uniquely positioned to change things for the better.

Kaleidoscope is part of Harry’s legacy—our mission to elevate teachers as knowledge generators carries on Harry’s vision for positioning teachers as agents of change in education.

Even when we delved into teachers’ stories that explored educational issues beyond teaching math and science, Harry remained our fervent supporter. He would email us after the release of every issue with his thoughts, encouragement, and excited responses to our work.

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celebrated with us, as we hope you will, the showcasing of “why we are doing what we are doing...and what Knowles is all about.”



Harry Knowles with four Fellows at a past Summer Conference.

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