Doris Pagelkopf’s Bio

Doris is currently Executive Director of the United Ways of Minnesota, a 35 member statewide association that she created over the past 20 years. She is also a nonprofit consultant specializing in leadership development, governance, planning and fundraising. She has worked with NGO’s on 5 continents. She spent several years with Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest, serving as Vice President of Education and then Vice President of Development, raising 2.5 million and then building Exchange City which teaches junior high students how to run a business and a city.

Justice issues have been at the forefront of Doris’ extensive volunteer and career life as she cares deeply about empowerment of women and girls, elimination of racism and children’s issues. She has been involved globally with three non-profits JA, ELCA (Lutheran Church) and the World YWCA. Junior Achievement International twice sent her to Uzbekistan to discuss free-enterprise with government officials and then was invited back to train the Peace Corp and Uzbek high school teachers to teach students how to run a business.

The YWCA captured her heart 40 years ago when she was living in Boston and went to work for the YWCA of Cambridge teaching young women to be leaders. On coming back to Minneapolis she visited the YWCA of Minneapolis when she was here house hunting and soon became Board President of the YWCA of Minneapolis. The YWCA captured her heart as every time she walked through the doors of 1130 Nicollet Mall she got goosebumps because of the Mission. She was then elected to the National Board of the YWCA USA where she chaired the Racial Justice Committee, chaired the national 135 Anniversary and many other assignments such as being national training faculty, training every new Executive Director and Board President of every YWCA in the USA.

The next lifechanging step was as a World YWCA Conference in Cairo where she was elected to the World Board of the YWCA, serving 8 years as a Vice President. During this time she was the leader on the international team raising $25 million to develop women as leaders in developing countries. She led a group to visit YWCA’s in China and then visited the YWCA’s in Palestine and Jordan. Also visiting the YWCA in Egypt, Korea, Kenya, Taiwan, Australia, Argentina, and Thailand and Taiwan doing governance trainings among other things. Her current involvement is being on the Executive Committee of the World Service Council.

The ELCA (Lutheran church) has been prominent in her life, serving on five national boards. When the ELCA was formed she chaired the national Commission for Women whose job was to get rid of sexism in the church. She has served on every committee there is in a congregation. Globally she was sent by the LCA to spend a month in East Germany, Poland and the Soviet Union, talking to women about the condition of women in these communist countries. The YWCA, United Way, ELCA and JA have been the major ways she has lived out a commitment to justice. Also important along the way and continuing is her work with Books for Africa as Board President. BFA has sent 59 million books to Africa, They have gone to every African country along with a Law Library to establish the Rule of Law. She continues her commitment to BFA as an Ambassador and volunteer for whatever they ask her to do. Avenues (for homeless youth) also captured her when she was a consultant and then a board member for 10 years. The very best youth homeless organization there is. She also volunteered at MAP for Nonprofits for 10 years, doing their board governance trainings.

The greatest joy and privilege has been meeting and working with diverse groups of people around the globe. Every country has a group of incredible people who care about the world and work to bring about justice and equality. Travel and just showing up is at the top of the list of important life understandings.