

Tribute

Remembering Gary Marsden

Susan Dray

Dray & Associates, Inc.

Gary Marsden was a Great—with a capital G—man. He influenced the development of a profession by focusing on creating technology *with* people, rather than merely *for* them. And he did so much more. He was instrumental in creating an important field of study, applying these human-centered ideas to projects for economic and social empowerment. With creativity, courage, and commitment, Gary devoted himself fully to this challenging work, in the process inspiring me and many others to do the same. In my opinion, he and his students have done some of the most innovative and important work in human-computer interaction recently.

While Gary was a stellar professional, he was also an exemplary human being. He was my friend. Indeed, it is who he was as a person that made the greatest difference in the lives of so many of his friends, students, and colleagues. He was a true friend: an ineffable blend of wit, irreverent humor, true genius, wisdom, deep insight, and vision—all wrapped up in an orange sweatshirt and khaki pants.

He was uncomfortable in the spotlight if he thought he was being singled out for praise, and gave credit freely to his students and colleagues. He embraced people from all over the world, and never took his own star status seriously. Instead, he used it to help other people: to get funding for students in need, to find information and other resources for friends needing assistance, to be the “big name” on reference letters for colleagues.

He never changed who he was. What you saw was what you got, regardless of the audience. There are many pictures of him, tie-less and in jeans, sitting with high muckety-mucks. You never had to wonder about him: Gary was consistently himself.

Love—an unprofessional word—was at the root of all Gary did. When he spoke truth to power, stood up for justice and integrity, or came to the aid of students and colleagues, he did so because he was, to his very core, a man who loved humanity and bridled at injustice.

It is this love he bequeathed to all of us, to shine as a beacon to others of what could be, of what *can* be when we unite in love.

We will all deeply miss this genuine, funny, warm, humble man. But we must remember that he has left us many gifts. And now it is incumbent on us to bring those gifts into the world as our tribute to Gary. He has enriched our lives and our world, and it is now our turn to carry that love forward. While we weep at his death, may we also be inspired to live up to his vision.

Rest in peace, dear, dear friend. ■

Susan Dray, President, Dray & Associates and Fulbright Scholar, USA. susan.dray@dray.com

To cite this article: Dray, S. (2015). Remembering Gary Marsden, *Information Technologies & International Development*, 11(4), 39.

