The Best Thing I Did In 2014

by Bill Brooks, CFRE, GPC

Now that 2014 is in the rearview mirror, it's time for a little reflection. What's the best thing you did last year, either personally or professionally? I asked that question to several experts in the grant writing field, and here are some of their thoughts:

Derrick Feldmann: Created a book of personal things he learned in 2014. The co-author of Cause for Change, lead researcher for the Millennial Impact Project, and president of the consulting firm, Achieve, told me, "At the beginning of the year, I created a new journal highlighting the best of 2014. This journal contained entries in four major categories: Inspiring people with quotes and teachings that made me think differently about my work; personal and professional failures; books/articles I found fascinating; and organizations/companies to follow."

Dalya F. Massachi, MA: Developed and presented the Grantwriter's FastTrack Coaching Program 5. This award-winning author, trainer, keynote speaker, and founder of Writing for Community Success said, "I worked with the first four groups of beginning/intermediate grant writers in a multi-week online forum. I learned what they are curious about and what works in a virtual group training and coaching setting. I will expand the program in 2015 to offer this opportunity to many more."

Heather Stombaugh, MBA, GPC: Started learning a new skill. The principal consultant with the grant writing consulting firm JustWrite Solutions told me, "Learning about herbal medicine combines my love of cooking, gardening, and the healing arts. The practice of preparing remedies improves my emotional connection to friends and family and fosters a humbling spiritual connection to nature. It has also helped me find some balance in my crazy, wonderful life."

Linda Gatten Butler, MSW: Experienced humility. This frequent grant writing lecturer and president/owner of Butler Consulting, Inc., wrote, "As a senior consultant with over 40 years of clinical, administrative, and fundraising experience, I experienced humility when I was named the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Ohio Region 7 'Social Worker of the Year'. I feel joy and humility to be honored by my peers and to touch many persons through grant seeking, training, and consulting!"

Diane H. Leonard, GPC: Co-founded SmartEGrants.com. The president/owner of DH Leonard Consulting & Grant Writing Services established SmartEGrants with her business partner, Jo Miller, GPC, CSMS, after the successful launching of #grantchat, a weekly Twitter chat for grant professionals. She notes, "SmartEGrants takes that sense of community and support for grant professionals and moves the vision a step further. SmartEGrants provides coaching, education, and community support to grant professionals at all stages of their career."

Dr. Beverly A. Browning: Recognized her professional value—to others and herself! This self-described "visionary disguised as a grant writer, instructor, mentor, advocate, laboring worker bee" and author of Grant Writing for Dummies told me, "I have been in the grant professionals industry for over four decades. The journey to where I have risen to today is one filled with hard work, diligence, tenacity, grit, humility, gratefulness, and FOCUS! This may be
hard to believe, but I did not even see or recognize my own value to colleagues or clients until 2014. On a vision-driven journey taken one night while sleeping and meditating, I experienced an awakening—an enlightening awakening. I emerged with greater confidence and the realization that I have changed many lives and organizations because of my miracle-filled gifts. I am a warrior, not a diva. I am a leader! I am valuable and in high demand! I am not at the end of my journey (at age 66); I am just at the beginning! I have adopted the charge of BEING THE LIGHT!"

If you create a book, develop a new program, learn a new skill, establish a new company, experience personal growth, see the light (no, not that light!), or do anything else fantastic in 2015, let me know at Bill@BillBrooks-Associates.com.