



Marianne Larned
Educator and Thought Leader

Marianne Larned is an innovative educator, thought leader, and business strategist with a lifelong commitment to humanizing education in order to build leaders for a more sustainable world. Her career path was inspired by her youthful experience in community service -- teaching inner-city youth to read and then responding to President Kennedy's Call to Action for teachers.

During her undergraduate education she was influenced by Dean Dwight Allen at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst School of Education. She applied the socially progressive humanistic education model she learned there, embracing a celebration of cultural and racial diversity in her student teaching in the Pelham, Massachusetts school district. In search of other progressive education models, she spent her junior year of college at the Rudolph Steiner International Training Center in Aberdeen, Scotland, where she was immersed in the "whole child" teaching model. Her experience there, teaching teens with special needs, had a profound effect on her. To deepen her understanding of the Steiner model, she conducted a site visit to Steiner's Anthroposophic Council for Inclusive Social Development in Dornach, Switzerland. Upon her return to the U.S. she discovered how others were applying Steiner principles at sister programs, for example at the Camphill Academy in Copake, New York, and in Cumberland, Pennsylvania. Ultimately, the Steiner approach led to the founding of the Waldorf Schools in the 1990s. It is now the largest independent school movement in the world, with schools in 75 countries.

Teaching Experience

Upon receiving her teaching credentials, Ms. Larned explored ways to integrate her progressive training and global experience into the U.S. education model. Her first teaching positions were working with special needs children, designing programs that responded to new legislation: the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA).

- Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Designed the district's first Learning Disabilities programs for children with special needs, grades K-6.
- Plymouth, Massachusetts. Designed an interactive program for undiagnosed first-grade students ("slow learners").

While she enjoyed the challenge of adapting her lessons to reach out to these children, Ms. Larned was painfully aware of how ill-equipped schools were to educate children with special needs.

Support for Public Schools

Through her teaching experience, Ms. Larned had seen firsthand that public schools were in dire need of more support. She returned to school to pursue her Masters' degree in Business at Boston University and California State University. She was intrigued by the emerging field of Organizational Development, and came to see how she, as an external change agent, could work with companies from within, to launch educational initiatives. She consulted with Fortune 100 corporations, and challenged business executives to support innovative ways to address their

issues of workforce development. She also pioneered the field of Corporate Social Responsibility, and developed public-private partnerships to increase support for public schools, as well as to address inequities in healthcare, the environment, and society.

Education Initiatives

- Created the **San Francisco Chamber of Commerce's School-Business Connection** to develop public-private partnerships to improve the quality of education in the city's public schools.
- Designed **Principal of the Day**, to increase business awareness of the challenges facing schools, and **Job Shadow Day**, through which companies provide principals and students with mentors for a day, to build win-win partnerships.
- Wrote a year-long monthly column, "The Business of Education" for the *San Francisco Business Times*. This column acknowledged companies that were supporting educational partnerships, and advised corporate decision makers about how to develop cost-effective programs to address their workforce development issues. With over 120 languages spoken in the homes of San Francisco, the city was a bellwether indicator for increasing ethnic and cultural diversity in the U.S. With the ever-growing influx of immigrants into the country, it was becoming clear that the education system was ill-equipped to educate these children.

Educational Consulting and Speaking

- **San Diego Chamber of Commerce:** Speaker/consultant on workforce development.
- **California Chamber of Commerce:** Designed state-wide workforce development programs.
- Consultant to the **American Montessori Schools** in California.

Ms. Larned also participated in the following educational initiatives, as well as numerous speaking engagements at conferences, retreats, and strategic planning sessions for major corporations.

- **The White House Taskforce on Innovative Learning: Washington D.C.**

To address the gap between education and workforce development needs, the standardization of education was introduced, leading to state standards and incentives to increase graduation rates.

- **U.S. Business Roundtable's Education Campaign**, championed by IBM's John Aikers.
- **Business Week Conference** on Innovative Learning & Interactive Video Industry Association.
- **Healthy Communities Initiatives** in Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago. This was a year-long process to engage community, corporate, government, and civic leaders to develop public-private partnerships to build healthier communities. Development and support for youth was the #1 issue facing all of these communities.

Business Leadership

To deepen her ability to effectively engage the business community, Ms. Larned immersed herself in **Claire Nuer's Learning as Leadership** - an intensive 6 year leadership program. There she learned how to build healthy eco-systems; create a more culturally inclusive corporate culture; reduce executive burnout; and increase healthy relationships within families, while striving to build a more humanistic business model.

Stress Management/Health Promotion/Wellness

After healing herself from a life-threatening illness using alternative medicine, Ms. Larned served as the first president of the Sacramento Holistic Health Association. She was a trainer for medical professionals, and served as faculty, conference organizer, and media spokesperson for the Holistic Health Institute. At the Health Research Institute, Ms. Larned helped build a national movement to improve the health of Americans by designing strategies for companies to reduce healthcare costs through incentivizing their employees to engage in health promotion and wellness programs. Projects included **Johnson & Johnson's Live for Life Cholesterol Management;**

McDonald's first salad bar; **Kraft's** first tofu cheese, and **IBM's investment in YMCA** memberships for their employees.

Stone Soup Leadership Institute

In 1997, Ms. Larned founded the Stone Soup Leadership Institute to support educators with supplemental teaching tools based on the award-winning book, ***Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes***. To beta test these tools, she developed eight culturally inclusive **Youth-Community Leadership Initiatives** in rural and underprivileged communities in Vieques, Puerto Rico, Oakland, California, Holyoke, Massachusetts, Hawaii, Martha's Vineyard, and Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands. She used the **Healthy Communities process** to build public-private partnerships and **Design Thinking** tools to increase collaboration with businesses, departments of economic development, and Chambers of Commerce in these communities. **The Institute's Career Mentor & Job Shadow Day Program, College Prep Program, and Entrepreneurship, Sustainability, Community Service and Leadership programs** are preparing youth for purposeful lives, and productive 21st century careers.

The Institute's Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development is the cornerstone of our programs. For 20 years, The Institute has worked alongside those on the front lines of **climate change, social justice and economic equity**. We've inspired hundreds of multicultural, underserved youth around the world to become leaders, by taking initiative in their lives, their communities and their world. Some of them are featured in the forthcoming book, ***Stone Soup for a Sustainable World: Life Changing Stories of Young Heroes***.

Publications

- **Author: *Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes*** (Three Rivers Press/Random House) honors 100 people, organizations, and companies from 65 communities and 29 countries around the world. In his introduction to the book, Walter Cronkite called it a “handbook for humanitarians” and “a road map for building a better world.” The book was premiered at the Presidents’ Summit America's Promise in 1996, was featured in book clubs, and received worldwide media recognition. Proceeds from the book support the work of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute.

- **Bilingual Book and Curriculum: *Pan Y Vino Para El Camino***

Actor and activist Edward James Olmos asked the Stone Soup Leadership Institute to translate the book into Spanish. When Latino youth read about the role models featured in the book, they are motivated to stay in school, graduate, and pursue their personal, professional, and planetary goals. In the book's introduction Olmos writes, “One of the most important gifts we can give our children is to read stories about those who went before them.” We launched the book at the first Latino Book Festival in Los Angeles, where Olmos received the Institute's first Cesar Chavez Award.

- **Educational Curriculum:** Piloted by the YMCA in eight states, this curriculum offers lesson plans for multicultural literacy, critical thinking skills, social studies, service learning, citizenship, leadership development skills, and character education. It has been used in 120 communities to prepare the next generation of leaders to address the economic, environmental, and social challenges of the 21st century. The curriculum, which includes audio and video elements, is a structured two-year program used by educators, after-school programs, corporate mentors, volunteers, and churches.

- ***Stone Soup for a Sustainable World: Life Changing Stories of Young Heroes*** features 100 climate change activists, green inventors/entrepreneurs, changemakers, trailblazers, educator champions, next-gen philanthropists who are building a more sustainable world. Our goal is to shine the light, attract media and support these global youth leaders and their organizations.

Transition to A Virtual Toolkit

The TouchStone Leaders Virtual Platform scales up the Institute's real-world experience, using rich bilingual content and methodologies to educate young people to become leaders in their lives, our communities, and our world. TouchStone Leaders is a one-stop shop for people to access these educational tools. It is a values-based, video-enhanced, content-driven, blended experiential learning environment featuring resources that educate, engage, and connect people with sustainable solutions that are empowering the next generation of changemakers to lead our world. It offers bottom-up lessons learned through working directly with community-based programs. The program is action-oriented, making it possible for learning and social change to happen simultaneously and effectively.

Bilingual Virtual Toolkit: Teachers are struggling to provide inspiring resources to their students. Studies show that Latino youth are struggling with virtual learning during the pandemic. This Toolkit is designed to address this challenge by offering stories about multicultural people who overcome obstacles and realized their dreams for their lives, their communities and the world.

Facilitator Certificate Program is an effective train-the-trainer program designed to maximize the impact of the Institute's educational tools in order to accelerate the development of 21st century skills. This personalized workforce development program trains people in the "soft skills" needed to address real-world situations, and to be effective servant leaders: powerful communicators who are able to lead and work on teams, adapt to the demands of various settings, be creative problem solvers, think critically about various issues, resolve conflicts that arise, and utilize project management skills to get work done. Taking initiative in one's life is especially critical for systematically disenfranchised communities in inner cities, rural areas, and on islands.

Awards: For her pioneering humanitarian work, Ms. Larned was recognized as an Outstanding Young Woman of America and World Intellectual of 1993, and she is listed in 2000 Notable American Women as well as the World Who's Who of Women. She received the Community Service Award from Hamilton-Wenham High School, Massachusetts.

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