**Gayle Gilchrist James 1940 – 2008**

IFSW President 1988 - 1992

Andy Mouravieff-Apostol Medal recipient 2004

Gayle was an inspiration to countless students, colleagues, friends and family. Gayle’s papers as well as electronic information can be viewed on the University of Calgary website  [**http://www.ucalgary.ca/sw/ramsay/Gayle-James/index.htm**](http://www.ucalgary.ca/sw/ramsay/Gayle-James/index.htm)

Born in rural Alberta, Gayle attended a one room school, and went on the complete her BSW in 1963 and MSW in 1966 at the University of Toronto.  She started her social work career with the Alberta Child Guidance Clinic before joining the Education Clinic, Edmonton Public School Board in 1967 and then the University of Calgary, the Faculty of Social Work in Edmonton in 1975 before moving to Calgary in 1994 and retiring as Associate Professor Emeritus in 2004.

While working with students with learning disabilities and their families, she developed a consummate passion for public issues that led to a life-long involvement in social advocacy and public policy. Her dedication to social work is noted in many professional association positions, first as Registrar (1974 to 1977), President (1979 to 1981) and Treasurer (1996 to 1998) of the Alberta Association of Social Workers and President of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (1981 to 1983).

Gayle's international career began in 1978 when she was elected Regional President for North America, a position she held for four years. She returned to the IFSW Executive Committee in 1986 and was elected as IFSW’s 10th President in 1988. She was instrumental hosting first IFSW World Conference 1984 in Montreal and in the establishment of IFSW’s Human Rights Commission in 1988.

She was awarded the first IFSW Andrew Mouravieff-Apostol Medal in 2004 in recognition of her longstanding contribution to international social work.

Gayle held many portfolios. Appointed by the Prime Minister to Chair the National Council of Welfare (1986 to 1989), she was the senior NGO delegate on the Minister of Health and Welfare's social policy mission to the Republic of China and the only woman and only NGO member of Canada's delegation to the UN Welfare Ministers Inter-Regional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare in 1987. She was a founding member of the Edmonton Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, Canadian Research Institute for Law and Family (CRILF), Canadian Social Work Foundation, Weiler Award Trust; long-time board member of the Canadian Council of Social Development and International Council of Social Welfare, Canada; and member of Kings College Circle, University of Toronto. Her many honours included an Alberta Achievement Award (Excellence Category), Exemplary Contribution Award (Alberta Association of Social Workers), 75th Anniversary Award (University of Toronto, Faculty of Social Work), Outstanding National Service Award (Canadian Association of Social Workers), Teaching Excellence Award (University of Calgary), Arbor Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service (University of Toronto), Lifetime Achievement Award (Pulse of Social Work, Calgary).

During Conference 2020 Sue Dworak-Peck presented a speech about the life and works of Gayle.