

To Ernie Bartell

Gabriela Ippolito-O'Donnell

One image can say more than a thousand words.



About this one, I can raise Guillermo's voice with total confidence and say:

"Thank you Ernie for your friendship of thirty years, for your leadership, vision, courage and determination to bring Kellogg to life. Thank you also for hiring me! We made a great team. Un abrazo, Guillermo."

Ernie Bartell was the initial and fundamental driving force in the creation of a wonderful, powerful research institution, the Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies. When during the first steps opposition came to the fore, Ernie decisively took the appropriate measures for a successful outcome. He convinced Father Ted Hesburgh that Guillermo O'Donnell and Alejandro Foxley were the right people, no doubt whatsoever, to skillfully manage the creation of such a vibrant and inspiring institution like Kellogg. He was right, it worked out, and Notre Dame became well-known throughout Latin America thanks to Kellogg.

Every time I see Ernie I ask him to tell me the story of how he convinced Father Ted that this was the way to go. It is a wonderful story. Everybody should know it!

I witnessed the first decade of Kellogg. It was amazing the sense of mission, the commitment that everybody had at the time, everybody had a role to play: students, professors, fellows, and staff. Kellogg was a true community proud of itself. I remember very vividly the adrenaline that one could feel walking down the corridor at Decio Hall and meeting Ernie, Guillermo, Alejandro, Scott, etc. It was the “dream team” of social sciences of Latin America. For almost three decades, Kellogg set the research agenda for the region on democracy and development.

We should all thank Ernie Bartell for that and more.

I must end this note thanking Ernie for his friendship that strengthened even more so after Guillermo’s passing. Ernie was very influential in my personal life. He was the first one at Notre Dame to know Guillermo and I had plans to marry. Guillermo asked Ernie for his blessing. I remember they had dinner together and when Guillermo came back I knew, because of his big smile, that yes!! we had Ernie’s blessing.

Thank you for everything, Ernie. Will you tell me again the story about how you convinced Father Ted about Kellogg next time I see you?

I love you,

-Gabriela