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Service, passion will grow aquaculture responsibly

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By Wally Stevens

Pre-competitive collaboration crucial for industry's future



GAA Executive Director Wally Stevens delivers the opening remarks at GOAL 2015 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

As I reflected on Veteran's Day and Remembrance Day on Nov. 11, I thought about what it means to serve a cause, whether it's serving your country as a member of the military or serving your industry in a pre-competitive manner.

At the Global Aquaculture Alliance's GOAL conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, three weeks ago, perhaps no words resonated more with the audience than those of Bill Herzig.

In accepting a well-deserved GAA Lifetime Achievement Award on Oct. 29, Herzig, a longtime friend and colleague of mine and former Darden Restaurants executive, eloquently said, "After 42 years in this business, I've learned that you make a living by what you get; you make a life by what you give. Find your passion."

In aquaculture, or in any industry for that matter, service is defined, in a practical sense, by an individual's ability to put aside the needs of his or her organization and confront shared challenges.

By finding your passion, you're serving your industry. Perhaps your passion is animal and health welfare, working to strengthen communication and education at the farm level so diseases such as acute hepatopancreatic necrosis syndrome (AHPNS) and enterocytozoon hepatopenaei (EHP) are more manageable. Or maybe your passion is consumer education, working with your peers to familiarize the public with responsible aquaculture.

In my opening remarks at GOAL 2015, I spoke about the complexity of the challenges facing aquaculture. As GAA President George Chamberlain once told me, the aquaculture industry is like an onion: The more you peel back, the more you find.

Whatever your passion is, I encourage you all to follow through with it by collaborating with equally zealous individuals in a pre-competitive environment. It's the only way that we'll be able to peel back the onion and confront the industry's challenges. At the end of the day, we're all in it for the same reason – to feed the world's growing population in a responsible and sustainable manner.

Thank you for your service.

Editor's note: View Wally Steven's opening remarks at GOAL 2015 here:



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