

Pioneer Hall of Fame: June Thomas Lavelle, class of 1969



University High School honors June Thomas Lavelle, class of 1969, as a 2011 inductee to the Pioneer Hall of Fame for her achievements and contributions to the area of micro-enterprise and business incubation around the world.

Following U-High, Lavelle received her bachelor's degree in music from the University of Illinois. She then served as the executive director, of the Fulton-Carroll Center, a not-for-profit association of manufacturers located in Chicago's riot-torn west side neighborhoods. She held that position for thirteen years. During that time, she worked to develop the local economy and reduce unemployment through various programs, including small business finance, vocational training, job placement, and public/private partnership. Lavelle's work turned Fulton-Carroll Center into the world's first and most successful business incubators.

Inc. Magazine dubbed her the "Mother of Invention," and Ernst & Young honored her with the prestigious "Entrepreneur of the Year" award in 1992.

After leaving Chicago, Lavelle has concentrated on international development by using business incubation and micro-enterprise. She currently serves as President and Chief Consultant for Lavelle & Associates, Inc., where she leads donor-funded projects and private-sector clients working in the areas of market research, strategic business planning, project proposal development, project management, and technical assistance in the areas of technology, commercialization, business incubation, agri-business services, and entrepreneurship.

Lavelle is known for her work in assisting marginalized groups, particularly in conflict sensitive states. She also has served as chief of party for numerous donor-funded projects around the world. She has worked on business incubation projects to assist youth entrepreneurship, micro-enterprise for victims of trafficking, and agri-business development for resource-poor farmers in Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Russia, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Belarus, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Burundi, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and Liberia. In Poland, she has served as Chief of Party for the U.S. Agency for International Development's Business Support Project.

Lavelle and her husband reside in Slomczyn, Poland.