Susan Manuel ‘67

Susan Manuel likely couldn’t have imagined that her early career as a journalist would serve as a solid foundation for what came next: two decades working as a United Nations peacekeeper in war-torn countries across the world.

After earning her master’s degree in journalism from the University of California, Berkeley, Manuel worked for newspapers in Nevada and Hawaii. While reporting and writing a column for the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Manuel began covering Southeast Asia and learned the U.N. was looking for people to work on an upcoming peacekeeping mission in Cambodia,a country that had just emerged from the throes of civil war.

“The U.N. was sent in to keep the peace and prepare the way for elections,” says Manuel, who headed to Cambodia in 1992 after being hired as a Spokesperson / Information Officer. “I had the right combination of experience for the job,” she adds, noting that she served as an advisor to Cambodia’s media and government on media freedom and responsibility. “I helped write the media guidelines,” she says, “that became their information law.”

Manuel spent the next ten years working as a U.N. peacekeeper in places like post-Apartheid Africa, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Belgrade, Pakistan and Kosovo. In 2002, she moved back to the states and worked for eight years at U.N. headquarters in New York. Her final field assignment came in 2011, when she served for nearly a year and a half in Darfur, as Deputy Director for Communications and Public Information.

One of the most rewarding things about her career was getting to know people from “not only all countries, but all walks of life,” says Manuel. The most difficult thing? The fact that “people expect so much when the U.N. peacekeepers come in – jobs, real peace and protection. It’s not that easy, and not that automatic.”

Though she notes that hercareer has provided “both the handicap and the luxury of not being married and of not having children,” Manuel has spent her personal time on other meaningful accomplishments**:** helping a group of Bosnians emigrateto the US, helping immigrants fill out citizenship papers as a volunteer with the City University of New York, and serving as a CASA volunteer - to name a few. She works now as an International Communications consultant, a job which once again includes “hardcore reporting” – this time for *PassBlue.com*, a female-led website covering global issues through the lens of the UN Press Corps.

Her years at HB, which spanned 3rd through 12th grades, provided a solid academic foundation for such a notable career, says Manuel. But she also says the school provided a “good moral compass,” and taught her loyalty and empathy for others – traits that undoubtedly came in handy in a career that continues to touch countless lives across the globe.