

PERSPECTIVES

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Financial and Estate Planning

Universal Outreach maximizes donations for the greatest impact

By Sylvia Ellis - Senior Estate Planning Advisor

This month, it is our pleasure to highlight the work of the West Vancouver-based foundation Universal Outreach.

Universal Outreach came to life in 2003 when founders Kent and Gerry Bubbs decided they wanted to take charge of their philanthropic contributions themselves – to ensure that the maximum amount of their donated money made it to the project it was intended for.

This idea of maximizing donations for the greatest impact is so important to Universal Outreach that they created their 100% Guarantee to ensure that every dollar donated to the foundation goes directly to projects. To make this possible, Kent and Gerry personally commit to covering all the administration costs associated with running the organization.

If this idea appeals to you, then brace yourself. It's just the beginning of the commitment this organization makes to everything it does.

For 11 years, Universal Outreach has dedicated itself to helping orphans, vulnerable children and adults break their cycle of poverty through education. Universal Outreach believes that every community is unique; that the shape an education program takes depends on the country, the community and the ambitions of the people with whom Universal Outreach collaborates.

Their projects have ranged from:

- building dormitories in Honduras so students at a school for orphaned children have a safe place to sleep at night
- to a well restoration program that not only restores a water source but also trains community members to fix and maintain their well
- to a beekeeper-training program so subsistence farmers have the extra income they need to ensure their children can go to school.

There is always one constant in every program Universal Outreach supports: the commitment of the people they work with. This organization only partners with people and communities who have a vision for their future – and a willingness to make that vision a reality.

Here's an example of the commitment and vision of the people Universal Outreach collaborate with. This year they are raising the capital for the development of a honey-processing centre in Liberia, where honey will be processed, packaged and warehoused. It's an exciting concept where development work



and business practices meet, yielding a viable business that benefits some of the lowest-income earners in Liberia: farmers.

This new processing centre is the fruition of an idea started four years ago, when a handful of farmers with basic beekeeping skills saw the difference that the sale of honey could make in their yearly income. But they faced the barriers of a strong market and supply chain. Inspired by their vision, Universal Outreach worked with the farmers to get the honey to market through a business called Liberia Pure Honey. Liberia Pure Honey is now sold in all major grocery stores in Liberia. In the past four years it has put US\$40,000 into the pockets of farmers.

Universal Outreach relies not only on the drive of the people in the countries it works in, but also on the knowledge and resources its donors bring from all over the world. If you think an organization like Universal Outreach is a fit for your charitable donations, please feel welcome to give us or Kent Bubbs, Jr. (Kent's son) a call to talk about how you can get involved. All donations are tax-deductible.

You can reach Kent at Universal Outreach via email, kentbubbsjr@gmail.com; or telephone, 604-922-0495 or 778-871-9352 (cell). As well, you can visit their website at www.universaloutreachfoundation.org.



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