

# A Modern-Day Mother Teresa

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## Jacqueline Pullinger Winning her Award

Jacqueline Pullinger, British Protestant missionary, founder of the St. Stephen's Society and author, was honored with the 2024 Stephen R. Covey Principle-Center Leader Award on October 4, 2024, at the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business.

Sometimes referred to as a "modern day Mother Teresa," Pullinger's lifetime of transformative work in Hong Kong began in 1966 when she was just 22 years old. After graduating from the Royal College of Music in London, Pullinger's aspiration to become a missionary led her to Hong Kong, where she arrived without knowing anyone and with only \$10.

With unwavering dedication, she began work as a primary school teacher in the Kowloon Walled City, a place known as 'Darkness' that was a stronghold of Chinese Triad gangs and one of the world's largest opium-producing centers. From lawlessness and despair, Pullinger established a youth center to help drug addicts and the homeless, laying the groundwork for what would become the St. Stephen's Society.

At the October 4 award ceremony, Pullinger said she was overwhelmed by the needs around her in the walled city but dealt with the hard by focusing on helping "just one person at a time." In her 80 years of service and leadership, Pullinger has helped thousands of people and treasures "heaps of wonderful stories."

Pullinger shared some of those stories and urged audience members to ask themselves "Who have we affected along the way?" For all those she has affected over the decades, Pullinger has been awarded the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) and has seen the St. Stephen's Society expand its mission to establish detoxification and rehabilitation centers across Hong Kong. Her journey is chronicled in her book, *Chasing the Dragon*.

At the end of the ceremony, Pullinger shared that she was reluctant to accept the Stephen R. Covey Principle-Center Leader Award and shies away from accolades. But Pullinger took the opportunity to share her "unreasonable joy" in Jesus Christ and urge listeners to follow the edict in Matthew 10:39 of the New Testament: "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Pullinger is the fifth recipient of the Stephen R. Covey Principle-Centered Leadership Award. Established in 2019, the award is presented annually to an individual who exemplifies principle-centered leadership. Located in The Jon M. Huntsman School of Business, The Stephen R. Covey Leadership Center's mission is to develop leaders of character and competence, who elevate all of society.