

Dean's Message: No Greater Impact



This summer it was my privilege to experience the last two days of Dr. Mike Glauser's epic, "Pedaling to End Poverty" bike ride across America. Mike and his wife, Mary, accompanied by a typical peloton of two-to-four cyclists rode nearly 4,000 miles in 47 days, traversing the TransAmerica Bicycle Trail. I did not ride. I joined Page Longhurst and Nicole Sperry as a "soigneur," or caretaker. To complete the coast-to-coast ride required our cyclists to spend 230 hours on a bike seat and climb approximately 150,000 vertical feet, including one torturous ride up "Vesuvius" to the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia.

This was Glauser's second ride across America. The ride this year was devoted to raising awareness and scholarship funds for the Huntsman School's Small Enterprise Education and Development (SEED) program that Dr. Glauser directs. (You can read more about SEED in this magazine's cover story, "No greater Impact.")

Why do it, you might ask? To answer the question more fully, it's best to let Mike speak for himself:

"Each year we select and train 100 students to spend a three-month internship in locations all over the world teaching people how to successfully build small businesses. Our students have taught more than 10,000 people in Peru, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, the Philippines, and other countries. Most of the families our students teach are earning \$100 to \$150 per month. By helping them start a small business they can earn two or three times that amount, which lifts them out of extreme poverty. Their children can go to high school and even to college.

"In the Philippines we helped a woman build a successful lumber business and several other companies. She in turn has helped dozens of other women build successful small businesses... In Mexico, our students helped another woman start a bakery that is now earning hundreds of dollars a month. And in the Dominican Republic, our SEED interns helped a man build a successful air conditioning company.

"But the greatest impact is on the lives of our students. They come back realizing they hit the jackpot at birth, and they decide to be givers in life rather than takers."

I love that. It's "Learning by Doing"—and it is powerful. Nothing we do at the Huntsman School will have greater impact on society for good than the combined effect of the character and competence of the Aggie students we teach and mentor. To influence these young people is both a privilege and a sacred trust. If you would like to help, please go to www.pedalingtoendpoverty.org.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in gold ink, appearing to read "Doug". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, thin tail extending downwards and to the right.