

Creating A Win-Win

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The next generation of Huntsmans and Coveys Launch the Stephen R. Covey Leadership Center

"We intend that the principles Dr. Covey has articulated will have a lasting impact on our students, our faculty, and our staff as the new Stephen R. Covey Leadership Center becomes a reality."

Today these prophetic words spoken by Huntsman School Dean Douglas Anderson in 2010 about world-renowned author and businessman Stephen R. Covey have come to fruition with the inauguration of the Stephen R. Covey Leadership Center at the Huntsman School on November 2, 2018.



David Huntsman, Stephen MR Covey, and Sean Covey

Stephen Covey's initial connection with the Huntsman School began in May 2009, when he spoke at the annual conference of the Shingo Institute for Operational Excellence. The Shingo Institute, the executive education arm of the Huntsman School, has developed a worldwide reputation for helping companies change cultures, better tap employee strengths, and become more efficient. Dr. Covey noted at the time that he was impressed to see the Shingo organization's philosophies and approach, and how it had "institutionalized principles."

That initial contact led to more and deeper engagement with faculty and students, and on February 18, 2010, Covey was named the inaugural Jon M. Huntsman Presidential Chair in Leadership. At a packed dean's convocation one week later, Covey noted that "in a world where trust is becoming scarcer, we have the opportunity and responsibility to produce the kind of leaders who will not be swayed, but instead will become positive

forces in their communities." Huntsman School Dean Douglas Anderson echoed Covey's call for positive moral leadership in business. "Today when people think of military science and leadership, they think first of West Point or Annapolis," Dean Anderson said. "I look forward to the day when those who think of commerce and leadership will think first of the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business."



Stephen liked to say, 'You grow businesses by growing people.'

— John Miller

Covey's immersion into the Huntsman School left him impressed that the school, a secular institution, had been teaching some of the same principles he had taught for years. "The leaders and faculty just seem to 'get it,'" he said. "They understand that by instilling in today's students a principled new mindset and skillset — one equal to the complex demands and challenges of today's new global, economic, societal reality — they will produce generations of leaders who will not only serve and lead their families and communities with greatness; they will attract to the organizations and teams they lead, the world's most talented, innovative, trustworthy people."



John Miller with his friend and mentor Stephen R. Covey

Covey served on the faculty of the Huntsman School for two years, before his death in 2012. But his service, and the School's focus on ethical leadership as a pillar of business education, led to many conversations with the Covey family, Jon Huntsman, alumni such as John Miller, and university leadership to create a center housed in the Huntsman School to develop and offer curricular and extracurricular opportunities rooted in integrity and respect, in principle-centered leadership. "Dad would say, 'I know what I want to do—unleash human potential,'" said Stephen MR Covey, who has followed in his father's footsteps to become a bestselling author, successful businessman, and internationally renowned leadership expert in his own right.

Miller, a graduate of Utah State, was heavily influenced by Covey's teaching. Handed the reins of the family business, EA Miller & Sons, as a 26-year-old, he was trying to figure out how to compete against the multinationals entering the beef business. It was not long before he approached Covey to help him shape a leadership team, a cohesive business culture, and an incentive system for motivating and retaining management employees. He engaged Covey regularly over the years that followed, and Covey created an operational language that became uniform among Miller's employees and raised the bar of performance within the company, leading to a tenfold increase in revenue over less than a decade. Miller credits his implementation of Covey's philosophies with helping to create an atmosphere of trust and purpose that has led to long term stability in key positions and substantial growth in each of the companies Miller has founded. "The seven

habits became the framework for my leadership style, and that of our management teams."

"Stephen liked to say, 'You grow businesses by growing people,'" Miller recalls. "He was a great example of that kind of servant leadership. The servant leader is powerful in helping people feel good about themselves and their contribution. They offer advice, give suggestions, but never take back the stewardship of someone else's responsibility."



Dad would say, 'I know what I want to do - unleash human potential.'

— Stephen MR Covey

Stephen Covey, noted as one of the most influential management experts in the world, had this sort of impact on millions of people throughout the world. In fact, Jon Huntsman recalled being approached by kids selling pirated copies of Covey's most popular book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, on the streets of Mumbai, India.

This focus on people, on personal integrity, and humility were also a hallmark of Huntsman's leadership philosophy. He noted that "playing fair in business is the total sum of a person's integrity and honor, and one's handshake should be their bond, and one's word should be their contract." The Covey Leadership Center, which counts as its partners the Covey family and FranklinCovey, the company Stephen Covey helped build, will integrate FranklinCovey's leadership curriculum into broader leadership training that will engage students in principle-centered leadership coursework, individual coaching and mentorship with trained experts, and global experiences. Students of the Center will also help to grow the knowledge base of principle-centered leadership through research collaboration opportunities with faculty. The Center will offer formal accreditation in leadership, including a Leadership Minor, with the flexibility for USU students from any college to participate, as well as a Leadership Certificate focused more on executive education in the community. "The Covey family is excited and honored to have this partnership and relationship with Utah State University," says Stephen MR Covey, "Our goal

is to build a distinctive brand and reputation consistent with everything the Huntsman School is already about.”



My dad defined leadership as communicating to another person their worth or their potential so clearly that they're inspired to see it in themselves.

— Sean Covey



An elementary school in Cache Valley displays the 7 Habits, as they learn about them through the Leader in Me Program.

In 1999, the A.B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School in Raleigh, North Carolina was facing decreasing enrollment and poor student performance when Principal Muriel Summers approached FranklinCovey about incorporating the 7 Habits into the standard curriculum. Together, they designed the Leader in Me curriculum to develop leadership skills in young students. That curriculum has now been implemented by nearly 4,000 elementary schools worldwide.

John Miller has been instrumental in supporting Leader in Me programs in elementary schools in Cache Valley because he believes Covey's leadership principles can

positively impact students of all ages. “I believe Stephen's greatest legacy will be educating kids,” says Miller, who recalls the surprise and humility he felt when Covey, an international expert in leadership, unexpectedly attended a lecture Miller was giving at BYU on his experiences growing people and businesses. A conversation between Covey and Miller's son, Alex, underscored Covey's commitment to personal learning that was a driving force behind his success. When Alex told Covey that he was currently a student, “Stephen matter-of-factly said, ‘I'm a student, too,’ and he was serious. He was a student of life,” says Miller. “He took every opportunity to learn whatever he could.”



Stephen changed my life in 60 minutes. He challenged me to find out how good I could become.

— Steve Young

The vision for the Covey Leadership Center in the Huntsman School is to serve the role at the higher education level that was played by the A.B. Combs Elementary School for primary education, to design and teach principle-centered leadership to college students. Sean Covey, another of Stephen Covey's sons and currently President of FranklinCovey Education, was heavily involved in the development of the Leader in Me program. As he noted, “my dad defined leadership as communicating to another person their worth or their potential so clearly that they're inspired to see it in themselves. That is what the Leader in Me Program is helping to do in elementary schools and middle schools around the world. We are doing something unprecedented with Utah State because we believe in our partners in the Huntsman School of Business. We really see this center as a model of leadership education in higher education, as a model for integrating and leveraging FranklinCovey content in a higher education setting.”

Dr. Jim Davis, the Buehler Endowed Professor of Management, will serve as the first executive director of

plan for the success of the next generation of Huntsman student leaders. “Dad always admired Stephen Covey as a great teacher of leadership and a great human being. We’ve established this professorship in his honor to bring the very best talent to the Huntsman School to support our students and the new leadership center,” said David Huntsman. In announcing the establishment of the professorship, Dean Douglas Anderson noted that the mission of the Huntsman School is to develop leaders of distinction in commerce and public affairs. “This professorship and the center are a concrete example of the commitment of the Huntsman and Covey families to our mission and will enable us to establish leadership as a core part of the Huntsman School brand and a core part of the brand of Utah State University. We will immediately begin to search for an accomplished individual worthy of being the named as the inaugural Stephen R. Covey Professor.”