



**PENCILS OF
PROMISE**

LIVE NOT IN DREAMS BUT
IN CONTEMPLATION OF A
REALITY THAT IS PERHAPS
THE FUTURE

— Rainer Maria Rilke

A GENERATION
EMPOWERED
WILL EMPOWER
THE WORLD.

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FOUNDER'S STORY



PA Announcement, 6:09am, January 27, 2005:

“EVERYONE PUT ON YOUR LIFE JACKETS, STAY OUT OF THE ELEVATORS, HELP ALL WOMEN AND CHILDREN UP THE STAIRS, AND GET TO THE FIFTH FLOOR OR HIGHER AS SOON AS YOU CAN!”

In January of 2005, as a Junior at Brown University, I attended the Semester at Sea study abroad program expecting to see ten new countries and explore independent travel. Thirteen days into the voyage our ship was being battered by three storm fronts and we were struck head-on by a 55-foot rogue wave. The wave shattered the bulletproof glass on the 6th floor where all navigational equipment was housed, knocking out engine power and leaving the ship in a state of mass hysteria. Left to the mercy of the surrounding 40-foot swells, prayer circles and screams could be heard for hours. Somehow, we miraculously survived the certain-death experience.

In one day everything had changed. All the things that each of us on that ship had previously prioritized seemed to be in a dynamic state of alteration.

It was under these circumstances that my backpacking travels across the globe began. Driven by a newfound desire to connect with the people, cultures, and beauty of the developing world, I spent the next three years backpacking as often as possible. Days and nights were spent

amongst the townships of South Africa, orphan-filled dumpsters of Cambodia, youth protests of Bolivia and beggar stations of India.

It didn't take much time to realize that responding to tiny outstretched hands with pens and pencils remedied much more than a dollar bill ever could, so hundreds of writing utensils were brought on every trip.

It was these experiences that inspired the name of our organization. The next time you see a child with asking eyes, give them something they can write or draw with and observe the expression of joy that overtakes their smiling face.

52 countries, 6 continents, 3 terrible attempts at a beard, 1 dusty backpack, and countless shared smiles later, I moved into New York City to start a career. In post-college working life I heard a repeated sentiment among friends and peers — the desire to participate in something fulfilling but lacking connection to any one organization. And the idea that a small amount of money makes no difference. They would then pay their \$30 bar tab without realizing that the same \$30 could put a child through several years of basic education in the developing world.

Pencils of Promise (PoP) began as a small project to build one school, but within a week of the first fundraiser, everything changed. I began receiving messages almost daily from friends and strangers looking to get involved. Each of them was looking for a way to channel their skills and abilities into a tangible non-profit. It was immediately clear that PoP could empower both children abroad *and* passionate

individuals at home.

We simply needed a dynamic non-profit that gave every contributor, in particular motivated youth, a deep sense of connectivity and ownership. Most importantly, we needed a non-profit that valued both major and minor forms of support.

This is the fundamental belief from which Pencils of Promise was born: no ripple of effort is so small that it should be viewed as insignificant. The first school we constructed demonstrates this — it was funded by nearly 2,000 individual contributions of less than \$100 each. That is the grass root-style movement we hope to create and build upon as we grow.

My personal journey began with a single wave of unfathomable destructive force. When waves approach we often look exclusively at their peak, forgetting that the power lies at the base. You are our base. Consider what would have happened if someone had never placed a pencil in your hand. It is only through your participation that we can begin to break down the forces of poverty, crime, discrimination and disease with towering waves of educational promise.

From all of us who believe in this shared mission, we extend a deep thank you for choosing to get involved. This is now your organization. Welcome to the movement.

It didn't take much time to realize that responding to tiny outstretched hands with pens and pencils remedied much more than a dollar bill ever could.

Adam Braun

THE EDUCATION CRISIS

75 million children in the world live without a pre-school education.

This doesn't include the 266 million adolescents out of school.

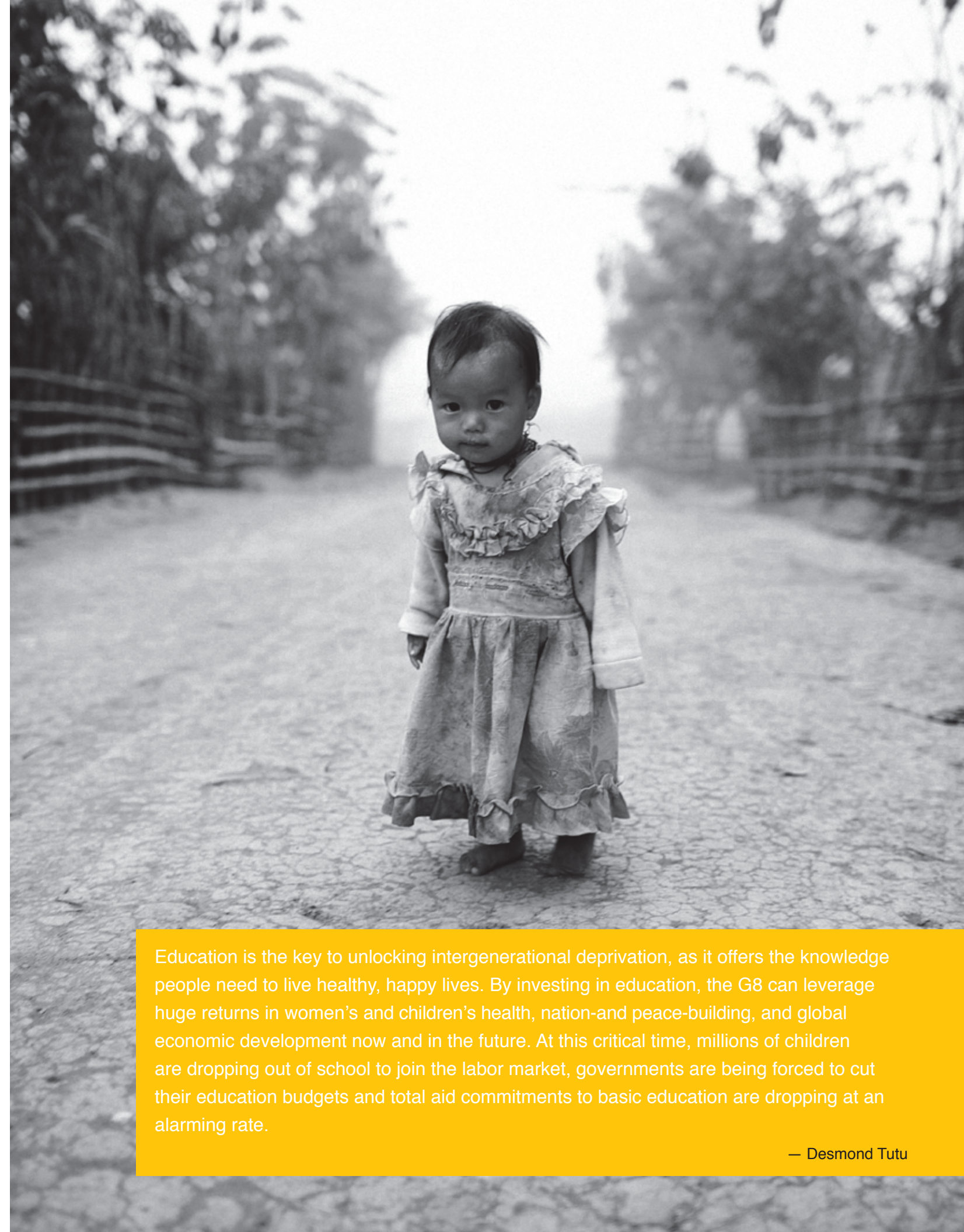
One third of all children out of school have a disability.

Most are child laborers from vulnerable households, orphans affected by HIV/AIDS or have disabilities. Girls are especially vulnerable.

These children miss out on the opportunity to develop talents, improve lives and contribute to societal development.

Nearly 250 million primary school aged children have to work to help their families.

Half of the world's out of school children live in communities where the language used in schools is different from the one used at home.



Education is the key to unlocking intergenerational deprivation, as it offers the knowledge people need to live healthy, happy lives. By investing in education, the G8 can leverage huge returns in women's and children's health, nation-and peace-building, and global economic development now and in the future. At this critical time, millions of children are dropping out of school to join the labor market, governments are being forced to cut their education budgets and total aid commitments to basic education are dropping at an alarming rate.

— Desmond Tutu

HISTORY



Pencils of Promise began with a simple act of giving. In October 2008, just before his twenty-fifth birthday, founder Adam Braun placed \$25 into a bank account. That became PoP's first donation. From there, we began our development into a new kind of non-profit.

In our first year of operation we have built three schools, established a presence in 20+ cities and college campuses, and brought on more than one hundred individuals as core members. All of this happened through the power of volunteers.

HOW THE MOVEMENT BEGAN

This organization was founded for you. For us. For everyone.

It began for every citizen of this global community with the knowledge that together we can empower the world. We grew from the desire to bring meaning to our lives through the creation of tangible good across the globe. This mission—this understanding that we are the global

generation—deeply resonated with many other young people.

It wasn't about money. People found ways to dedicate their skills, abilities, contacts and resources toward the mission of building education abroad. They found the time in their personal lives, after full days of work, to come together. Soon we had some of the top young professionals from many major industries. Using their expertise to join forces, we created a new type of non-profit—one that values, utilizes and depends on every form of involvement and support.

We compiled our skills, built partnerships with non-profits, and hit the dirt road to find the right village for our first school.

Within six months we had more than seventy-five volunteers, over \$50,000 raised primarily from donations less than \$100, and were ready to break ground on our first preschool in Pha Theung, Laos.



WE ARE PROUD TO SHARE THE FOLLOWING HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ORGANIZATION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2009:

- < Raised \$125,000 in donations through fundraising events and one-off support
- < Over 90% of donations were less than \$100 contributed from individuals between 21–29
- < Partnered with Give Children A Choice and Community Learning International to build three sustainable schools in Laos
- < Formalized partnership with Seeds of Learning to break ground on new schools in Nicaragua in early 2010
- < Built our 1st school in Pha Theung, where classes began September 1, 2009 for 35 students ages 3–6
- < Built our 2nd and 3rd schools in Phayong, where classes begin January 1, 2010 for 135 students ages 3–10
- < Full-time summer internship program with students from Harvard, UPenn, NYU and Northwestern
- < Placed our 1st PoP Fellow with partner Seto Guruns in Nepal to study best practice models for early childhood development


OUR MISSION

WE BELIEVE
THAT
EDUCATION
IS A BASIC
HUMAN
RIGHT.

Pencils of Promise is a passionate community of individuals collectively creating a non-profit that empowers each person, regardless of status or position, to make a positive impact on the world. Together, we build sustainable schools, partnerships and solutions to enable basic education for underserved children in the developing world.



THE POWER OF EDUCATION



A child is 40% more likely to live past the age of five if its mother has had a basic education.

A single year of primary school increases the wages people earn later in life by 5–15% for boys and even more for girls.

At least 700,000 new cases of HIV could be prevented each year if all the children in the world had a classroom to study in.

No country has ever achieved rapid and continuous economic growth without first having at least 40% of its adults able to read and write.

The economic success of India and China is based, to a large degree, on their ability to focus on improvement on their school systems.

For each additional year of secondary school, an individual's wages increase by 15–25%.

NICARAGUA

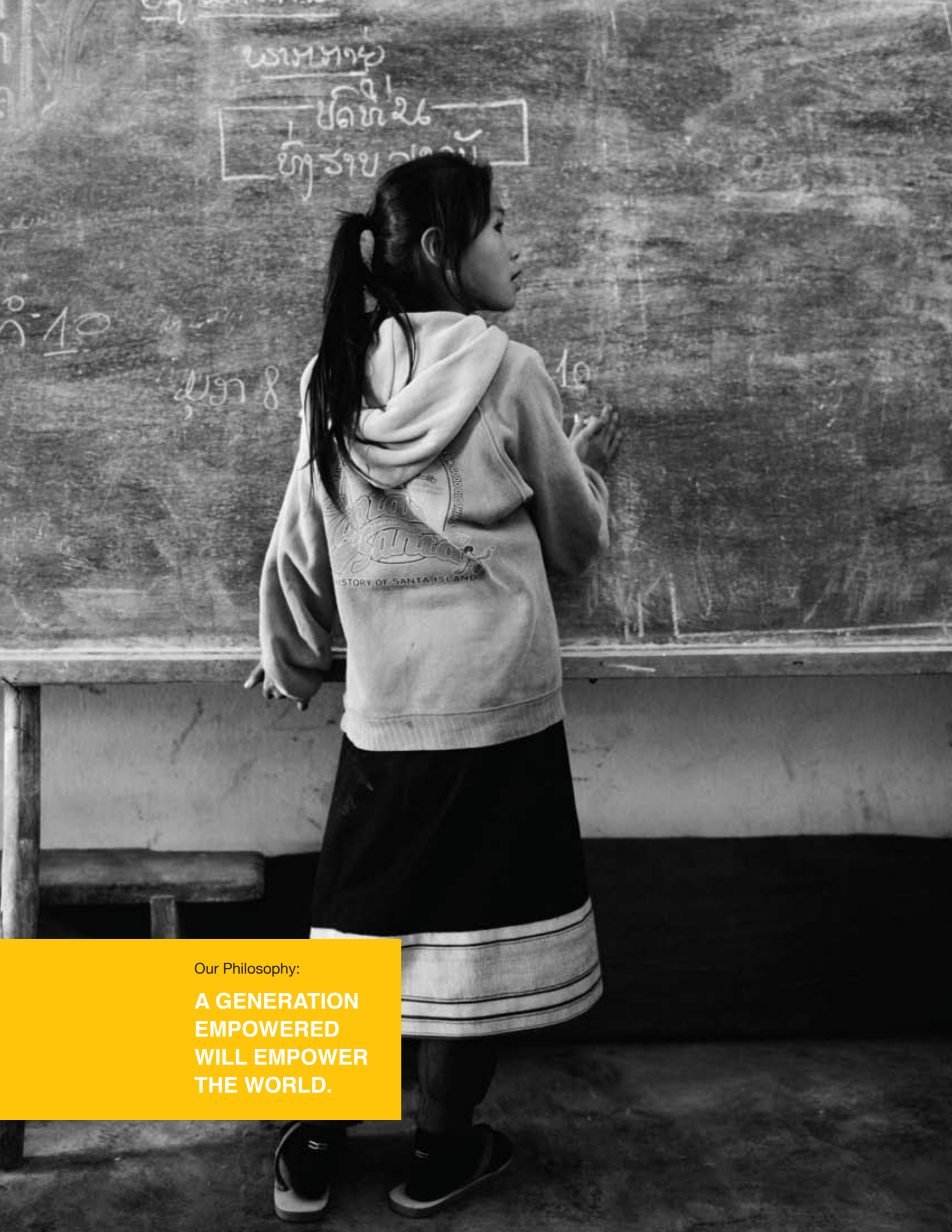
Partnering with Seeds of Learning, we will break ground on at least three schools in San Jose, Blandon and San Ramon in 2010.

NEPAL

In the Fall of 2009, we placed our first PoP Fellow with our partner, Seto Guruns, to study best practice models for early childhood development.

LAOS

Partnered with Give Children a Choice and Community Learning International, we completed three schools in 2009 in Pha Theung and Phayong, giving 170 students ages 3-10 access to basic education. In 2010, we will break ground on libraries, dormitories and schools in Pak Pa, Huayphan, Champhet, Pak Ou and Nong Kiaw.



Our Philosophy:

**A GENERATION
EMPOWERED
WILL EMPOWER
THE WORLD.**

FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

If we don't love what we do we are doing something wrong.

We must profoundly understand each local culture before we can hope to improve their educational opportunities.

Our most important partners are the communities themselves.

We build more than just four walls; we build demonstrable and impactful education.

We are dedicated to the long-term sustainability of each project we support.

Innovation, collaboration and creativity are at our core.

A non-profit should operate with complete transparency and efficiency.

All donors should have the opportunity to choose where their money goes.

Every single contribution and contributor is a valuable part of this movement.

HOW WE BUILD



We form three kinds of partnerships:

- < AN NGO WITH TEN YEARS ON-THE-GROUND EXPERIENCE
- < THE COUNTRY'S EDUCATION MINISTRY
- < THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

We visit the villages of greatest need prioritized by the education ministry to create a community profile. We survey their community and education leaders to assess and understand desires, needs and commitments. They must provide at least 10% of project funding (most often in the form of materials and labor) so that the entire community finds ways to participate in the process.

OWNERSHIP = SUSTAINABILITY

Schools are not viewed as a gift. Each school belongs to the village itself, under the jurisdiction of the education ministry that we partner with. By engaging the community from the earliest stages and ensuring this participation, the sense of ownership will lead to long-term sustainability.

TESTING METRICS

We don't just want to build structures; we want to build education. We objectively test in our schools to demonstrate to donors and supporters the impact of our schools on the children who attend them.

DON'T LEAVE SCHOOLS AFTER BUILDING

We work to facilitate the construction of each village's school, and provide long-term support to ensure sustainability. Before we break ground on any school we include three years of school supplies and three years of school maintenance costs. Our in-country coordinators consistently check-in with each community to ensure their needs are being met and we step in to provide assistance whenever necessary.

YOUR DONATIONS MATTER AND LEAD TO LONG LASTING RESULTS

We don't just want to improve an individual's activities; we want to improve his or her status. Students have careers beyond farmers or weavers to aspire towards. We also care about more than just academic education. Our coordinators teach life-enhancing lessons about proper hygiene, personal health, nutrition and environmental care.



CASE STUDY: PHA TEUNG

About Pha Theung:

LOCATED: PAK OU DISTRICT, 33KM FROM LUANG PRABANG TOWN

POPULATION: 654

THREE ETHNIC GROUPS: LAO LOUM, HMONG AND KHMU

AGRICULTURAL-BASED LIVELIHOOD

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME: \$400

PRIMARY SCHOOL STATUS: 1 SCHOOL WITH 102 STUDENTS



THE CHILDREN

Pha Theung has 61 eligible preschool-aged children. These children often spent their days unsupervised while their parents worked, and they had no access to the building blocks of a basic education. By the time they are able to attend school, they will already be at a significant disadvantage. With preschool education available to them, they are now able to get a jumpstart on their cognitive development, motor skills, and language skills, which will ultimately empower them toward a higher quality of life.



OUR SCHOOL

We broke ground on the Pha Theung Preschool in late March 2009. All of the materials and labor came from the village itself. After three months of hard work, in early July 2009, the first Pencils of Promise School was completed. For just over \$18,000 (which includes three years maintenance, materials, and teacher salary for two years), the village had its first building with running water and electricity. Thirty-five children now attend the school in its inaugural year, providing them with the foundation they need to continue on the path of a successful education.

THE FUTURE

With basic testing metrics approved by the Luang Prabang Ministry of Education, we will be able to track the progress and growth of all Pencils of Promise students as they move forward with their education. This school was our first step towards placing a pencil in the hand of every child so that they can make a positive mark on this world.



On a Sunday afternoon I arrived in Pha Theung after visiting four other villages of extreme need. No classes were in session. I curiously peeked into a classroom made of thatched bamboo where I saw three young girls alone practicing their letters on a broken chalkboard. They turned and embarrassingly covered their faces. Within minutes more than ten kids were at the chalkboard playfully drawing and writing. They laughed and excitedly replicated anything I wrote. The place screamed of desire for education, and I immediately knew that this would be the site of the first PoP school.

— Adam Braun



THE 49%

THE GLOBAL GENERATION

NOUN. A collective of young people bound by a shared passion to promote social good. Not defined by age, borders, cultures, or socioeconomic backgrounds, they believe that the ripple effect of individual efforts can start a movement that will lead to real impact and sustainable change.

There is a need for an organization that can inspire young people and ignite in them their full potential to create change. We believe that Pencils of Promise is that organization.

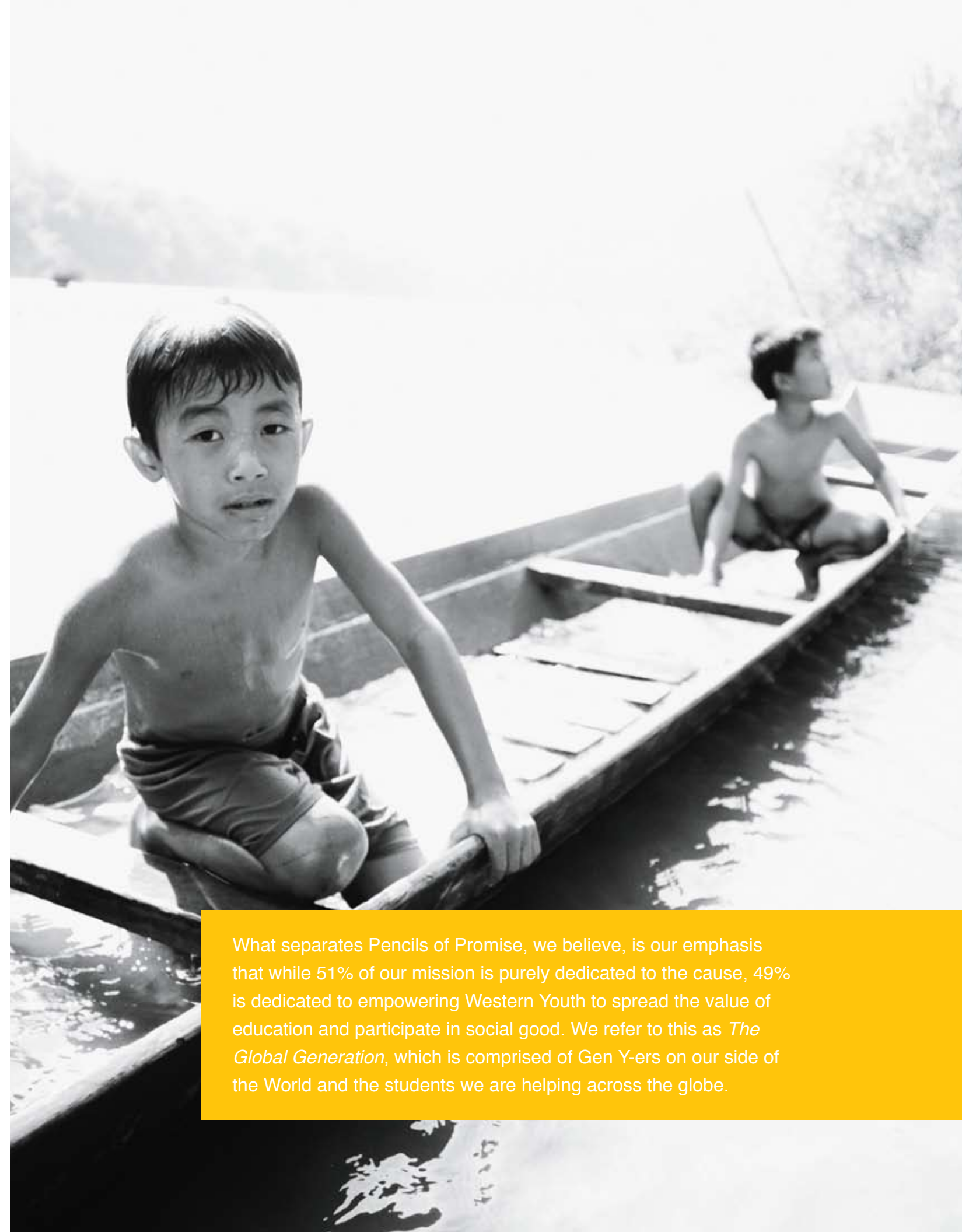
51% of our mission focuses on bringing basic education to children who need it the most. That is, and will always be, our primary objective.

But not to be ignored is what we call the “49%.” This represents our mission to empower first-world youth to spread the value of social good.

Too often, people have a desire to help others or to contribute to a cause but feel as though they don’t have the time or the money to do so. In other cases, people are concerned that their contributions are a drop in the bucket and won’t have a real impact. As a result, their intent to do good lies dormant and, more often than not, is extinguished before it is ever fully ignited.

Pencils of Promise is built to ignite and amplify people’s intent to make a positive impact on this world. We believe that the greatest contribution a person can make isn’t money — it’s their unique perspective and skills. As an organization, we seek to empower people to contribute what they’re truly passionate about.

By channeling that perspective, skill, and passion, and enabling young people to spread social good, we will be able to collectively impact the people around the world that need our help the most. By bringing education to those high-need areas we are strengthening the bond between our 51 and 49 percent and laying a strong foundation for *The Global Generation*.



What separates Pencils of Promise, we believe, is our emphasis that while 51% of our mission is purely dedicated to the cause, 49% is dedicated to empowering Western Youth to spread the value of education and participate in social good. We refer to this as *The Global Generation*, which is comprised of Gen Y-ers on our side of the World and the students we are helping across the globe.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

To learn more, donate or get involved
with Pencils of Promise, please contact:
getinvolved@pencilsofpromise.org

or simply visit:
www.pencilsofpromise.org

and don't forget to follow us on
Twitter and Facebook:
www.twitter.com/pencilsofpromis
www.facebook.com/pencilsofpromise

for Marketing and Creative inquiries,
please contact:
Brad Haugen
bhaugen@pencilsofpromise.org

Thank you!



Design: Chris Peck '10, Jacqueline Tribou '10
Cover Illustration: Kiyomi Hoshikawa '10, Elena Pignatelli '10
Design Corps, Pratt Institute, designcorps.pratt.edu
Photography: Nick Onken



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