

ADVANTAGE

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EMBRAER QUARTERLY
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ALL IT TAKES IS A PENCIL

Born from a simple idea, Pencils of Promise gives children the hope of a brighter future through education. With schools located across the world, the organization's global approach provides education and opportunities through a direct giving model with local leaders on the ground to ensure every cent goes into programs that directly benefit students around the world. We sit down with CEO Tanya Ramos to discuss the program's model and how every one of us can make a difference in the life of a child.



What sparked the idea for Pencils of Promise?

Founder Adam Braun was traveling abroad when he asked a young child if he could have anything in the world, what would it be? The child wished only for a pencil. Adam was so moved it inspired him to build a school—followed by over 500 more schools—for those who want and deserve access to quality education.

Is there a philosophy that drives the organization?

Our philosophy is that everyone has promise, and that where you start in life should not determine where you end.

Can you describe your process for developing new programs?

We base our programs on key learnings and insight from the experts and staff in our partner communities as well as the data that we collect. All of our programs are created to augment and support the national curricula and government teachers, ensuring that we are making teachers' jobs easier while also advancing student outcomes.

Beyond the children, what benefits does the organization bring to communities?

A key element of our work is that the entire community is invested and supportive of our being there. We require that the community in which we invest contributes 20% to the build project. This investment may be in human resources or materials, but we do not operate without community engagement and investment. If we have learned anything from recent events, it's that we are all connected to one another. Our students share what they learn, including health and hygiene practices taught in our WASH programs (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) with their families and that educates an entire community that may not have had access to the information previously.

What has been the biggest surprise on your path to success?

It's not so much a surprise as it is remarkable to recognize that not only does everyone have promise, but that through education anything is possible. I grew up in poverty, with a parent who struggled with addiction. At Pencils of Promise, we believe that where you start in life should not determine where you end up. If it did, I wouldn't be where I am today—working to ensure that all children around the world have the same access to

education that I did. I am living proof that when a child is provided access to a quality education they are set up for a brighter future.

What do you see for the future of Pencils of Promise, will it continue to grow?

The future of PoP looks so bright! In the first 10 years, we grew from one school to over 500 schools impacting over 100,000 students! Over the next decade, we will not only continue to grow, but also continue to evolve and expand our programing. We have distinguished ourselves as one of the most successful global school build organizations. This year we are looking at "Beyond the Build: From Pencils to Progress" to emphasize the importance of equipping our schools with best-in-class programing, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Teacher Support and other core elements that remove barriers and assure success and sustainability.

How can individuals and businesses support the organization?

There are so many ways to support, depending on your interests and capabilities. Visit pencilsofpromise.org/take-action to explore various opportunities, and consider dedicating a school with us, sponsoring a

signature program, joining our Passport program, lending your expertise on a leadership or advisory council and follow us on social media to help spread the word!

In consideration of the current COVID-19 pandemic, has the program taken measures to educate and protect children against the virus?

Like so many, the pandemic has created unique challenges. Safety is our number one concern and therefore school and construction in our partner communities are temporarily on hold. Our team is following and encouraging others to follow recommended guidelines of their respective healthcare professionals and government. Technology and communications are even more challenging in our partner communities; when possible, we are reaching out to teachers via WhatsApp to stay connected and provide resources. Thankfully, we have been advocating health and hygiene practices—such as WASH programing—as a core part of our curriculum and those practices are being reinforced at home which we know helps save lives. ◀

For more information, visit: pencilsofpromise.org



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