

World-Changing Power!

"Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin..." Zechariah 4:10



Upon reflecting on my childhood recently, a strong memory came to mind. My father was a shipyard worker, like most fathers in our neighborhood, and though people had little money, they did seem to understand the world-changing power of community. One day, a neighbor's son died in a boating accident. Within minutes of the news, my mother and several other women got busy arranging meals, visits and care for out of town family, and became a friendly shoulder for the grieving to lean on. While not wealthy in the world's sense, my mother told the neighbor women, "Don't worry if you can do a little or a lot, we just need to help with whatever little we have – God will take it and help them begin to heal." Wow! That simple act of kindness and generosity was the start to helping a family deal with their own worst nightmare. *"Do not despise these small beginnings..."*

Sports Outreach continues to grow, but the core concept expressed in Zechariah still remains – when God confronts us with a big thing, we simply trust Him and start showing compassion and generosity. One of God's most amazing attributes is His ability to take "small beginnings" and turn them into much larger, God-glorifying endings!

Within Sports Outreach, we see:

In Charlotte, NC, volunteers join our staff to work in the clothes closet, distributing donated clothing to disadvantaged refugees. Though it is hard to verbally communicate, as most of the refugees do not speak English, through this simple act of generosity and compassion Jesus' love is shared. A used shirt or dress may sound like a very small beginning, but that small step has introduced entire families to Jesus and placed them on the path of restoration and healing.

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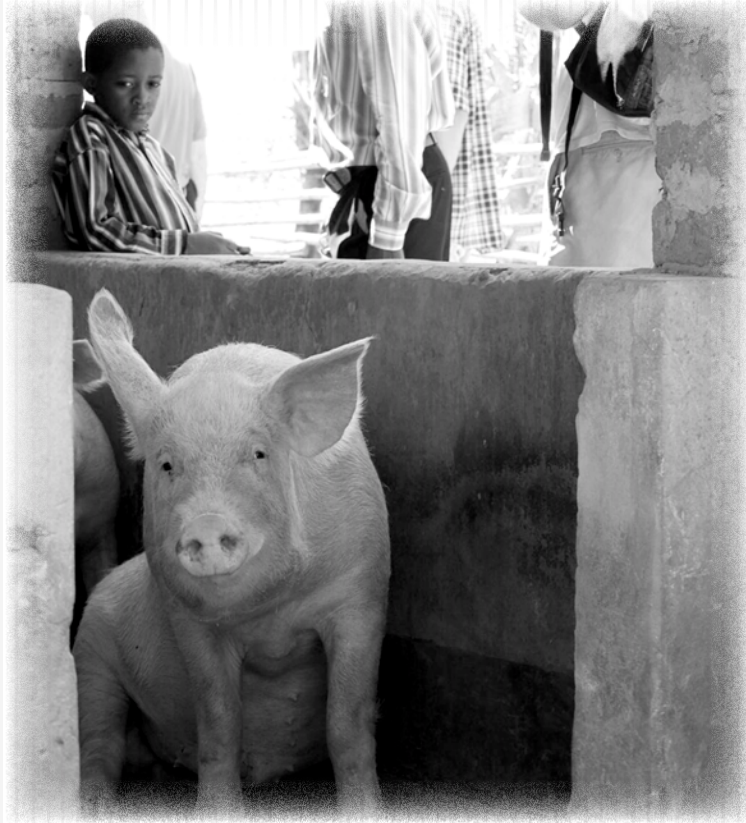
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Learn more about Gift Planning to support Sports Outreach Institute.
Email Dave Biehl at DBiehl@SportsOutreach.net.

In Kampala, Uganda, some 600 children and HIV-positive adults are blessed, everyday, by the simple kindness of hundreds in America who help pack and ship food through Stop Hunger Now. Individuals, ages 4-92, motivated by compassion, package food for people that most will never meet this side of heaven. Truly a small beginning, but the work that it begins leads to health and wellness for many.



In Lynchburg, VA, an adult Sunday school class collected offerings, so that Sports Outreach staff could build pig shelters in Gulu, Uganda. These piggeries have resulted in economic independence for 68 people and have provided school fees for 25 children. Their community is growing in dignity and self-worth. An amazing transformation from a small beginning.

In California, this past October, hundreds of riders participated in the 2nd Annual Santa Barbara Century Ride. Displaying a marvelous act of generosity, race organizers contributed part of the proceeds to Sports Outreach, which, in turn, directed them toward education and the Andrew Popp Memorial Scholarship Fund. As a result of this action by the organizers, 378 children in Nairobi, Kenya will receive education and their ten dedicated teachers will receive a small salary.



My old neighborhood has changed. Most of my parents' friends have died or moved into assisted living communities. Many of my peers, their children, have moved away to chase their own dreams. I often pray for them, as I do for our brothers and sisters in Sports Outreach, that they remember the world-changing power of small beginnings and a caring community.

Thanks to you, a community of over 1,000 donors, Sports Outreach continues to carry on the work of the Lord through acts of kindness and generosity. Maybe you've never donated to SOI before, but, as you read this monthly newsletter, you feel called to become a small beginning. Take a look at our website (www.sportsoutreach.net) to view other stories of compassion or generosity, and consider whether now might be the time to make a donation, either through our website or by mail using the slip below. Then, let God show His world-changing power!

Grace & Peace,
Rodney







Yes, I'd like to help make a difference for SOI...

- Please use my gift "Where Needed Most".
- Please use my gift as staff support for _____
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Please make checks payable to Sports Outreach Institute.

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