

Nonprofit Profile - HeadNorth Foundation

Organization: HeadNorth Foundation

Name: Randal Schober, executive director

Mission of organization: To provide support and guidance to individuals and families affected by spinal cord injury and championing a cure for paralysis.

Web site: headnorth.org.

Founded: April 2006.

Milestone: Launching of our Response ONE and TWO Grant programs to assist spinal cord injury survivors from the hospital to re-integration back into an active lifestyle.

Annual income: \$400,000.

Expense allocation: In an effort to minimize operational overhead we rely on volunteers and professional community support. The year 2008 should see more than \$250,000 go to individual grants.

Corporate supporters: None as yet.

Board chair: Steve Rosetta, Cushman & Wakefield.

Board members: Joey Straza, Vertechs Enterprises; Bob Regnery, RPR Partners; Mike Macie, Cushman & Wakefield; Claudia Obertreis, Ability Center; Bill Lundstrom, Lundstrom & Associates; Chris Pascale, CB Richard Ellis; Jack Burger, Burger Construction; Lisa Kennedy, LandMark Events; and Paul Jacobson.

Founder: Eric Northbrook.

Employees: Two.

Volunteers: Three.

Upcoming events: HeadNorth Silver Strand Challenge on Nov. 16.



Wish list: To obtain significant corporate supporters to help us sustain the great spinal cord injury need that exists in San Diego. And, of course, to one day find a cure for paralysis.

OFFICE ISSUES

Recent challenge: To learn the legal requirements of the not-for-profit sector and maximize the tax-exempt status within the boundaries of law set by the Internal Revenue Service, state Franchise Tax Board and the state attorney general's office.

Measures of success: It is important, like in life, to appreciate the small steps we take. Successful steps have been to finalize mission and values, establishment of grants program, launching of Web site, getting our mission out to the local SCI community via hospitals, rehab clinics and support groups.

Smartest move: Communicating and aligning myself with other successful nonprofit executive directors to share ideas, goals and obtain guidance.

Missed opportunity: Every moment when I do not successfully communicate to San Diego the needs of the SCI community is a missed opportunity.

Misconception I: Like every for-profit business, not-for-profit organizations need to maximize all the "good-to-great" keys and also must be experts at community relations and marketing of their missions.

Misconception II: That the medical needs and physical issues of an SCI survivor plateau.

PROFESSIONAL INSIGHTS

Personal path to nonprofit work: Background in exercise physiology led me to explore how I could truly utilize my experience and education while fulfilling a God-directed desire to give back.

Toughest aspect: The diversity of my job responsibility ranging from board development and grant programs to business infrastructure and legal commitments.

Most surprising aspect: The professional people you meet who have dedicated their lives to make other lives more fulfilled.

Biggest pain: The need to be in a continued fundraising mode. This, however, also provides the best opportunity for education and telling the inspiring stories of SCI survivors.

Greatest pleasure: Meeting some of the most inspiring and hopeful individuals who have taken a crippling circumstance and made it into a positive purpose.

INTROSPECTIONS

Best recent moment: Trip to Argentina and hiking in the Patagonia mountains. P.S., my Spanish needs some serious help.

Worst recent moment: Death of my grandfather, although at 100 years, I reckon he had a pretty good innings.

Greatest inspiration: My mum, through a difficult physical life, she has kept her faith and love for everyone she meets.

Downtime: Beach time: surfing, volleyball, tennis, hanging with mates.

Causes: Southern Sudanese Community Center and Water for Sudan project.

Most like to meet: Jesus Christ.

What music do you have on your iPod? Third Day, Casting Crowns, John Butler Trio, Midnight Oil and U2.