PHILANTHROPY

Design-build sparks meaningful social impact globally

Recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Design Build Institute of America in 2007, The Opus Group founder Gerald Rauenhorst pioneered the idea that streamlined project funding/purchasing and integrated cross-functional teams deliver elaborate projects faster, more smoothly and with more effective outcomes. He challenged industry norms beginning in the 1960s to benefit his clients while growing The Opus Group into one of the largest multidisciplinary real estate development, design and construction firms in the world.

Rauenhorst's legacy in design-build extends far and wide – as far as Zambia, Cambodia, the Central African Republic and beyond – through the family foundation he and his wife Henrietta founded in 1965, GHR Foundation. At first blush, the design-build approach to delivering university residence halls, corporate campuses and sports stadiums may seem to have little application to philanthropy and global development. Looking deeper, however, one can see many of the same principles in play: creating models, forming symbiotic teams, sketching a plan of action, consulting on plans and helping shape the results.

"GHR Foundation benefits greatly from our design-build legacy as we strive to make the biggest impact," said Amy Rauenhorst Goldman, CEO and Chair of GHR Foundation. "We're always designing and building with our partners, learning and adjusting our collaborative solutions to global challenges. Design-build philanthropy emboldens us to be more creative and risk-oriented for more effective outcomes."

Design-build philanthropy is an innovative, collaborative, fluid approach to grantmaking. The unique approach to grantmaking brings together a broad range of partners early and often to work through problems, adjust design, learn and iterate together. In GHR's

DBIA Lifetime Achievement Awardee and The Opus Group/GHR Foundation founder, Gerald Rauenhorst

Amy Goldman, GHR CEO & Chair visits Zambia where the foundation supports children and families.

experience, this is leading to stronger partnerships, deeper networks, joint ownership, and most importantly, creates the time and space for comprehensive, long-term change to take root and flourish.

In the southern African republic of Zambia, for example, severe poverty and AIDS have resulted in an estimated 1.4 million children living outside of family, or family-like, care. Parents too poor to provide adequate food, shelter or medical care often assume their children will fare better in residential care institutions (orphanages) than remaining with family.

Research shows otherwise, however, and most in the child protection sector agree children should be in families whenever possible. Organizations that work with

orphanages are crucial to the wellbeing of children, and GHR meets them where they are, providing resources that facilitate the shift toward community-based models, foster care services and eventually, family care.

Through its Children in Families initiative, GHR Foundation is applying design-build philanthropy to fund a collaboration of several Zambia-based NGOs working together to provide a spectrum of services to prevent child abandonment and return children to family or family-like settings.

Early wins derived from GHR's start-up funding are demonstrating to potential funding partners and the Zambian government that the collaboration will yield favorable results. "We believe early action and learning, paired with collaboration at every level, provides the greatest opportunity for modification and impact," Goldman said.

GHR Foundation has now taken its design-build philanthropy to the next step with the launch of the open innovation "BridgeBuilder" Challenge with OpenIDEO. The challenge is helping the foundation identify emerging social innovators working at the intersection of prosperity, peace and the planet. Those who submit the top ideas will split prizes totaling $1 million, with the winners also benefiting from GHR's design-build philanthropy to advance and scale their ideas.

Rauenhorst may not have imagined the design-build principles he advocated would extend beyond commercial development. As a tireless entrepreneur and early social innovator, however, he would applaud GHR for calling upon his legacy to advance its global development, education and health initiatives.

More information on GHR Foundation and design-build philanthropy at: www. GHRfoundation.org