

Kiwanis International Counselor Keynote

Speech 08/2009

Greetings from KI. Before I begin my prepared remarks I want to thank you on behalf of the entire Kiwanis Family for sending Sylvester Neal to the Board and for continued support to get him elected to Vice President. The effects of your action will change the lives of millions.

Do you know how important you are?

Do you know how special you are?

You are members of an international organization of member volunteers who give more than 6 million hours and more than \$100 million dollars each year to help change the world one child and one community at a time.

In a typical year, Kiwanis clubs worldwide organize more than 150,000 service projects. All of this, yet we continue to lose membership.

Kiwanis is the best kept secret in North America. Why do you think that is?

We are not telling what we do. We need to be a passion and not just a past time.

In North America, Kiwanis was once a household word in most communities. Now, in too many instances, it is just a historical footnote.

We need to place a “Kiwanis lives and serves here.” neon sign that shines 24 hours a day in every community because there is a 24 hour need in every community.

Our name needs to be a household name... connected to serving children and leadership development.

We need to be a passion and not just a pastime. Is it asking too much for every Kiwanian to commit to recruiting one new member?

The issue isn't membership decline. It is the attitude toward that decline. So many of us don't ask others to join because (subconsciously) we don't want to be rejected.

It's not about us. It's not about me or any individual Kiwanian. Kiwanis gives us a place to leave our imprint for generations to come. A Kiwanian is like a teacher; you never know where your influence ends. You can well effect eternity. Each of us is a point of contact -----a point of entry. Each of us came to know Kiwanis in a different

way, but each of us was touched by a Kiwanian. It changed our lives and we owe it to others to change their life. Let me take you on a personal journey.

(STORY) I was asked to lunch one day by my neighbor.

His name was Doug Shields. Little did I know it was a

Kiwanis meeting. I had no idea what Kiwanis was. I

joined and was asked to assist at a Special Olympics event

2 weeks later. At the event, I served as a track judge.

During that day, there was a race where one of the

contestants fell down, but finished race last. When the

award medals were being presented I placed a gold medal

around the neck of the winner. He immediately called the

contestant who fell forward, removed the medal from his

neck, and placed it around his neck. It was that moment that I became a Kiwanian for life.

I am NOW a Kiwanian by choice and a Kiwanian for life!

My life in Kiwanis has been a journey of discovery and change which has been the catalyst that propelled me toward self acceptance, unconditional love for others, appreciation of life, and a renewed relationship with God.

Kiwanis taught me the way to feel better about yourself is to make someone else feel better!

Kiwanis – Building leaders to help children around the world.

The needs of the world are great, and together members of the more than 8,000 international Kiwanis clubs

accomplish great things for children and communities.

The best way to meet that need and move from good to great is to expand our influence.

In order to expand our influence, we instituted a

Worldwide Service Project in _____ to eliminate the scourge of iodine deficiency disorders. Together, we raised, not the goal of \$75 million, but well over \$100 Million and together with UNICEF, virtually eliminated IDD on this earth. Kiwanians, working together worldwide, have changed the course of humanity.

Your Kiwanis Board, together with your Foundation, KIF, has once again, decided to embark on another life changing world wide service project. This was announced at the International Convention in Nashville

Kiwanis international is inviting organizations, institutions, and individuals to help identify its next Worldwide Service Project – a directed program that engages Kiwanis members and others to make a positive difference by helping children in need around the world. One need not be a member of the Kiwanis family to propose an idea.

Proposals are due by October 1, 2009, and must:

- Involve a child-focused issue or problem
- Be compelling and relevant
- Involve a global and local level of participation and impact
- Include hands-on service and fundraising

- Address a virtually solvable problem or issue
- Support Kiwanis membership growth
- Lead to life-changing experiences
- Be aligned with Kiwanis' brand promise: Leadership and character education that lead to life-changing service

All proposals must be submitted in electronic format.

Kiwanis will accept proposals until October 1, 2009,

and will announce its second Worldwide Service

Project in June 2010 at the 95th annual Kiwanis

International convention in Las Vegas.

Speaking of International Convention June 24-26,

2010.....

As you know, Kiwanis is dedicated to membership growth and has set a goal of one million members by the year 2015, while remaining committed to our mission of service to children.

Kiwanis will grow by finding new innovative ways to connect volunteers with the needs of children. New initiatives include:

- 1-2-3 You Hold the Key
- Company Based Membership
- Club Satellites

Kiwanis is committed to becoming flexible and member-responsive. We want to empower the club.

Kiwanis began welcoming women in July of 1987. By the end of 1988, more than 8,500 women worldwide had become Kiwanis members. Today, more than 60,000 women perform community service as Kiwanians.

Kiwanis, recognizing that no single organization can provide the remedy to the needs of Children worldwide, has joined with Boys and Girls Clubs through a Memorandum of Understanding, encouraging Clubs and members to work together to foster, nurture, and establish a legacy of serving children.

Kiwanis is not just an organization, it is a verb, that when properly activated, has the power to change the world,

much like it has changed each one of us.....one person at a time.

Will you ask someone to join you at your next Kiwanis meeting?

Is there someone in your life who needs a more purposeful life, needs more joy, a new way of life, more fulfillment? You have the power to offer it to them.

Will You?

When it comes to making a difference in the lives of children, the time is right now. The time to make a difference in the lives of people who need us is Right Now. We cannot afford to wait. The needs are too large.

We can make time to make a difference in the lives of children and we need to do it Right Now.