

No More Mediocre Days

Reflections from our Founding Chairman



I often tell the story of passionate parents in a warm and loving household who ensure that their child is ready for school each morning. Lunch is prepared, the child's homework is complete and her school bag is packed. After the family eats breakfast, the child's mother walks her to the front door, kisses her on the cheek and says, "Have a mediocre day."

In reality, no parent prepares his or her child to have a mediocre day. Every parent wants and expects his or her child to have a great day at school, filled with the excitement of learning.

What if every single day in a student's academic life was a great day, filled with engaged parents, great teachers, high academic standards and relevant and reliable assessments all working together to create a culture of success for that student?

We need more days like this, great days in education.

As I reflect on the work of Helios and its partners in 2014 and over the past 10 years, I can see more great days on the horizon. By investing in education, we are having a tangible impact on the long-term economic viability of Arizona and Florida. While we know this work cannot and will not happen overnight, we are confident that in the aggregate, we are moving the needle forward and better preparing our students for success.

It was 10 years ago when Helios Education Foundation was created out of the conversion and sale of Southwest Student Services Corporation. Even in this relatively short period of time in the life of a foundation created to exist in perpetuity, we have much to celebrate and cherish. What began as a

genuine passion for ensuring that more students in Arizona and Florida achieve academic success has flourished into an impactful, strategic movement, and we have our partners to thank for this success.

Helios' 10 years of strategic investments are leading to great days in education built on stronger and better performing education systems impacting thousands of students, teachers and families. With more than \$155 million invested in education initiatives across both states over the past 10 years, our work has changed the lives of well over 135,000 students and 16,000 educators for the better.

With all of these initiatives and more, building a better-prepared pipeline of students, our 2014 fiscal year created an opportunity for us to crystalize the four core beliefs that drive our mission and propel our education reform strategy forward. Those core beliefs are as follows:

- We believe education changes lives and strengthens communities.
- We believe education is an investment, not an expense.
- We believe every student, regardless of zip code, deserves a high-quality education.
- We believe we will achieve our mission through strategic partnership and collaboration.

Preparing every student to succeed in college and career and equipping them with the critical thinking and analytical skills that our economy demands will take continued commitment and strategic leadership from all segments of our community: education, philanthropy, government, faith-based and business.

Ensuring our students have more great days in education requires bold steps, committed partners, targeted resources and fearless leadership. With this collective power, we can and will shape a future where every student is prepared to compete and succeed in a global economy.

Sincerely,



Vince Roig
Founding Chairman