

PROLOGUE -- CLASS OF 300/FRANKLIN TRICENTENARY

The Goal

The fundamental goal of this undertaking is to provide a continuous source of highly skilled individuals who can offer large assistance to not-for-profit advocacy groups seeking to improve fund raising, public relations and message impact.

Prologue

This Plan arises from what I learned during the nearly twenty years I lived abroad, extensive reading of exceptional thinkers, particularly - Locke, Paine, Madison, Jefferson, Hegel; close observation of 20th century personages who caused extraordinary revolutions on the strength of their ideas - Havel, Mandela, Ghandi, Gorbachev, Pope John; review of what made wartime leaders like Lincoln so successful and Osama bin Laden so worrisome; scholarly articles from the e-learning and environmental community; Stuart Brand's thought provoking book 'Clock of the Long Now'; a dozen or more biographies about Ben Franklin -- all of which are eclipsed by Franklin's "Way to Wealth" -- which takes ten minutes to read and a lifetime to completely understand.

<<http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/wohlpart/alra/franklin.htm#Way>>

I have also hugely benefited from being imagineer, and along with Dr. Midi Cox, chief cook and primary bottle washer to the largest and most unusual event in the education world - an event called Global Learn Day, now in it's eighth year.

Mostly, I attribute whatever personal growth I have made in the last decade to contacts with exceptional people doing extraordinary work in every part of the planet. They are connected to me by the magic of e-mail, blog, Wiki, streaming media, ham radio and that old fashioned instrument called the telephone.

Additionally, I have met with many of them in Europe, Asia, New Zealand, Australia and here in the Americas. There is no way I can thank them sufficiently.

All of it has made me better understand that we not only live in a globalized, Google-ized world, we also live in a world dangerously threatened by too much greed, too much me-first, too much NIMBY; that all first rate societies are, in my not-so-humble-opinion, at risk by a sound bite mentality which voraciously chomps at the one cornerstone on which all democracies must rest: An informed populace.

Finally, every bit of this has strengthened my conviction that the path to a safer, saner world runs through classrooms where motivation, pluralism, human rights and curiosity are on high display.

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The Premises of this Plan

This Plan rests on the following convictions:

- * Well managed events are crucially important for advocacy groups. The need for skilled people to run them with excellence cannot be overstated.
- * Very few advocacy groups use affordable technology to significantly improve event management, fund raising, outreach, and message impact. The best model on the planet is <http://www.moveon.org>
- * The cost to train individuals who can effectively use their networking contacts and technology skill sets can be recovered reasonably quickly by the benefits those persons generate.
- * There are incalculable benefits from working overseas to help with the orchestration of a global event,
- * As proven by those who landed at Normandy, nothing fires the engines of synergy more than a common, challenging experience on behalf of a noble cause.