

“To be nobody but yourself in a world which is doing its best to make you somebody else, means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight and never stop fighting.”

E.E. Cummings

Strength and courage aren't always measured in medals & victories. They are measured in the struggles they overcome. The strongest people aren't always the people who win, but the people who never give up when they lose.”

Ashley Hodgeson

NEW BEGINNINGS

New Year! New Beginnings! New Directions! New Award! New Website!

Four full pages of words and it still isn't enough room to tell you all of our new “news” here at Courage to Be You, Inc., so please go visit our newly revamped website at www.c2bu.org.

We are so excited to announce the 2007 recipient's name of the **Elizabeth Williamson Water Walker Giant Slayer Award**. This honor was established to recognize an individual the Courage to Be You (C2BU) founders feel most demonstrates the courage to be who God created them to be; in spite of their circumstances, in spite of their fear. This journey often requires leaving the comfort of the “boat” they know to “walk on water” of the unknown. Often, they must face fearful giants that attempt to stand in the way of their purpose and destiny. This year's recipient has certainly done all of that and more. Charlie Thornton or as he is better known in Africa, “Papa Charlie” and “Jenny's dad”, here at C2BU, is this year's unanimous recipient. Charlie is a 70 year old, retired U.P.S. truck driver who lives in Jackson, Mississippi. He is married to Janey, his lovely bride of 48 years. He has four children and 8 grandchildren that live here in the United States. However, we have lost count of the number of African orphan children that call him “Baba” which is Swahili for “grandpa”. Charlie has been to Africa 3 times within the last 18 months. The first time he went, he did so simply because he was asked. He tells the story this way “when my daughter asked me if I would go to Africa and plant a garden at an orphanage, I immediately said yes - never once believing I would go.” Prior

to his first trip to Africa, Charlie had never traveled outside the United States, he didn't even have a passport. But what he did have was an overwhelming desire to make a difference. Charlie said his life changed directions several years ago. He had just retired and was planning on playing a lot of golf and handball. The only trips he had planned were ones that included visits with his grandchildren and playing more golf. Charlie says all that changed when Hurricane Katrina hit the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Without being asked, Charlie volunteered to drive water and supplies to the victims there. He did that 7 days a week for over 6 weeks. “For the first time in my life, I saw that one person can make a difference in the life of another. At that moment, I wanted the rest of my life to matter. I wanted to make a difference”, Charlie emotionally remembers. After Katrina, he knew he was going to Africa, to make a difference. He just didn't know he'd keep going back—back to plant gardens, back to be a grandfather to children who have no family, back to dig water wells for an African tribe that lives in the bush, back to make a difference in the lives of so many who have nothing. You can find more details of Charlie's inspirational story on our website under “Awards”.

Thank you Papa Charlie for having the courage to be and do all you were created to ... you inspire us all to do the same.



LIFE COACH: CLEANING OUT THE CLUTTER

“Don’t ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people that have come alive.”

Whitman

“Making a difference one individual at a time—thus changing the world.”

Courage to Be You

Clutter. Everyone I know is talking about it; specifically how to get rid of it. Some of us are very good at purging it, throwing it away, giving it away but then there are others of us who just can't. We hold onto our clutter, defending our right to it by saying, "I may need it one day"—no matter how old or useless it has become. In life coaching, we talk a lot about clutter—physical, mental and emotional clutter. When we clear away clutter, no matter where it resides, we create space. When we don't have enough space we are cramped and we lose the ability to be fully present in a situation or a relationship. If our physical space is full of clutter we feel short—short of room, short of time, short of temper and

short of clarity. By simply purging, filing and cleaning off a desk or clearing out a closet we can instantly experience increased energy and creativity. The same can be said of our mental space. When we have enough mental space, we have room to take on new ideas, contemplate our purpose and pursue our dreams. But a nagging things-to-do list, an unfinished project, or unresolved issues in our lives can rob us of mental space and decrease our ability to focus. Whatever grabs our mind should be addressed immediately or simply written down. Get the list out of your mind and onto paper with a deadline to complete each task. Space has now been created. A few other ways to create mental space is by talking a

walk, exercising, praying, or listening to music. It should be a daily practice.

Having plenty of emotional space gives us room to pay attention to our emotions. However, emotional clutter like old grudges, judgments against others, imaginary conversations defending ourselves and unresolved arguments all take up emotional space. Stop the tape in your head, instead vow to have the difficult conversation, forgive an old offense. Intentionally, throw out all the emotional clutter along with the 15 year old bridesmaid dress that is still in your closet. Clutter is clutter no matter where it resides. Get rid of it!

If you need help, go to www.c2bu.org and contact one of our Life Coaches.

A PERSONAL STORY OF COURAGE

We asked Adriana Amer, one of C2BU's college Scholarship Program awardees if she would express what it meant to her to come to the U.S. to attend college. She agreed. "Here we go spinning around in an endless circle as if we are in a lottery tank waiting for life to decide to pick us up and give us a chance to fulfill our dreams and continue our path. When this chance comes along, it is then our role to get up and hold on to it with some courage, strong desire and a lot of hope to achieve our goal. My chance came and I decided to take it and give it all my best.

It has been a very difficult year for my family and I, especially with the cruel war that destroyed our homes and killed our people. I live in Lebanon in a valley named "Bekaa", its beautiful nature surrounds my life and fills my soul with joy and relaxation despite of the war. War came as soon as I got back from my

year as an exchange student in California, and this impacted my life and made me view things very differently. War then ended and schools began, tears and broken hearts from pain and sorrow were seen in the eyes of many children and parents. There were families who lost their children and children who are now homeless with no one to lookout for them. Sometimes, I would even prefer to stay at home and lock myself up instead of looking at this terrible misery that my people are living in and I can't do anything to help. The Economic situation was bad but with war it got even worse, and this reflected our life in a negative way, many people needed food, water, a place they can stay in until the war is done and it was very hard to be strong and face it.

I was in my last year at high school, in a desperately crazy way I tried and tried to figure

out a way that will help me continue my education so that I would help my family, especially my sisters to continue their education too and have a good future. Kelli Jones, my community representative when I was an exchange student and co-founder of Courage to Be You stayed in contact with me when I returned to Lebanon. She was the only one among all the people I know in my life, even the very close ones who stepped up and helped me. Kelli and her organization gave me the chance, was there for me always and made me feel like there is a purpose for my life. That I should be strong and endure everything. I am very grateful for her and I advise all the people or students that are in my situation to never, ever lose hope and be patient because life is setting up for you a plan but its all in your hand to choose the right road". Adriana Amer

MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE IN AFRICA

His name is Deo, and he wants to be a doctor when he grows up. He is doing very well in school, he just needs help to make his dreams come true. Theresa Grant, Courage to Be You's International Director is passionate about making sure Deo's and 21 other orphan children's dreams of a better life come true. Theresa is back from Africa for a 3 month stay in the U.S. to share the dreams of these orphan children in Africa and raise money for their school tuition. Theresa talks of her passion to see these kids receive an education "as I look outside of my family's home in Idaho I see blankets of snow, so much the schools were closed. I remember as a child praying for snow days so school would

be cancelled and we could ski. I saw education as an obligation or at that time, a "drag". Although, I still love skiing powder, now being in my 30s and living in a 3rd world country, I now look at education as an amazing privilege.

However, the orphan children I work with in Africa see education as a GIFT! When their tuitions are paid for with donations from Courage to Be You, they jump up and down, give me huge hugs and laugh like I have just given them a trip to Disneyland (which they have never heard of). These children are so eager and motivated to go to school, it is my passion and life's purpose to see that happen". It only takes a \$1 a day annually for a child to realize their dream

"I LOVE my life!" wrote Jackline, a child who lives at the orphanage. Her mother died and her father could not take care of her, so she lived with her grandmother. She was not allowed to go to school because she had to do her chores. There were many days Jackline went without food and clean water before coming to the orphanage. She has had a difficult beginning to her life, yet she writes ... "I LOVE my life!" Jackline continues in her journal "My best friend is Madam Theresa and her friends from around the world (she then names all of the C2BU volunteers) They are my best friends because they have helped me learn." We are changing the world, making a difference one individual, one child at a time.

Won't you help us? All it takes is \$1 day, \$365 annually to equip, encourage and empower one child to fulfill and discover their God given purpose—to realize their dreams. These kids have no parents to do this for them, that's why we are.

Courage to Be You has set up an education fund (see the article below) designated to provide for these and others children's education. Any money you designate to this fund goes directly to the children.

All the individuals working with C2BU do so on a voluntary basis, by faith ... even Theresa Grant, our courageous, inspirational International Director.

C2BU's Education Program

We believe in order for individuals to discover and fulfill their God given purpose, education is paramount but many kids around the world do not have the financial means to attend school. We at C2BU have a passion for providing these kids the resources necessary to further their education. We know that looking at this need on a global basis is overwhelming. So we don't. We focus on making a difference, one child at a time.

In 2007, we started with the kids we knew. 22 school age children at an African orphanage where our Director, Theresa Grant volunteers.. Through donations we provided their tuition, 2 meals a day, transportation, and their uniforms. In 2007, we also provided tuition for a student named Daniel Matepeta to attend a community college in his home town in Africa while still living at the orphanage where C2BU volunteers worked. Daniel says "before

my mom died she had big dreams for my life and wanted me to succeed. Thank you for pushing me towards my mum's dream".

We are continually amazed how children who have experienced such personal loss still hold onto their dreams. Under our Education Program we have set up two separate funds to continue and expand these educational efforts in 2008, the **College Scholarship Fund** and the **African Children's Fund**.

Our expanded efforts for this year include bringing students from abroad to attend a community college here in the U.S. and later providing the opportunity to transfer to a four year university. The College Program in the United States also includes components to equip, encourage and empower students to be all they were created to be. Regular sessions with a life

coach, financial planning & budgeting strategies, bible studies, community service projects are all made available to the students. Scholarships are awarded through C2BU's application process. Our dream for the future is to have a home, a Courage House, for the students to live in as a group while they are in the U.S. to create a sense of family and belonging. Our first students studying in the U.S. are Adriana Amer, from Lebanon and Kagore Njagi from Kenya, Africa.

They are living with Kelli Jones, one of C2BU's founders, in the San Francisco Bay Area. We already have college applicants for the fall

of 2008. In the U.S. during 2008, we will also be working with students who are aging out of the foster care system with no family and no hope of a college education. Our dreams are big and we need your help. If you would like more information on this program or interested in hosting a student in your home, contact Kelli Jones. kelli@c2bu.org. With donations please specify College Scholarship Fund or African Children's Fund.



Deo, studying hard at school to become a doctor.

Courage to Be You, Inc.

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Do you have the courage to be you? The you God created?

“Most of our obstacles would melt away if, instead of cowering before them, we should make up our minds to walk boldly through them”.

-- Orison Swett Marden.



“Courage to Be You, Inc. (C2BU) is an international, non-profit, Christian organization which seeks to change lives one individual at a time. C2BU believes that each and every life not only has value but has a God-given purpose and destiny. C2BU exists to equip and encourage individuals to become who God created them to be and do all they were designed to do - nothing more - but absolutely refusing to settle for anything less and then helping them to encourage all the people in their lives to do the same”.



Jenny Williamson, President, C2BU

I have never thought of myself as a courageous person. For a long time, I believed courage was a personality trait. Either you had it or you didn't. However, the older I get, the more I realize courage is a choice. It is a verb not an adjective -an action not a description. Mr. Webster defines courage as **“action in the face of fear”**. Action I don't mind, it is fear I try to avoid. Eleanor Roosevelt disagrees with me. She suggested we should “do one thing every day that scares

you”. “Why?” my mind screams. But even as I ask the question, I know the answer. Doing something that scares me, something I fear requires me to “choose courage”; it requires action on my part. Fear paralyzes me but courage moves me through its invisible wall. When I break through that wall, a sense of accomplishment and confidence embrace me. Doing what scares you can also help you find your purpose in life. It has been my experience, that which scares me the most is often that for which I am created. My dog, Jake taught me that lesson. Jake is a Lab. Labs were created to swim and hunt. Jake does neither. When he was a puppy we gave him a bath (an unnatural act for a dog) and the water hose freaked him out. For years, he refused to swim (that for which he was created) because of his fear. Then one day, he saw two ducks sitting on a pond. I truly believe, his inner desire

to do that which he was created became stronger than his fear—because without warning, my old dog (he was 63 in dog years) began running towards the water and with much grace, belly flopped into it. I don't know who was shocked more, me, Jake or the ducks! Finally, he broke through his wall of fear. Though Jake now swims everyday, I am sad he spent most of his life scared of the very thing he was created for. But then, so did I. Unlike Jake who's natural instinct kicked in, I daily have to make the intentional choice of courage, of action. I now fear regret more than I do failure, criticism or laughter. My desire to be and do all I was created for has now become my passion. That is why C2BU was founded—to equip and encourage everyone we meet to become who God created them to be ... in spite of their fear, in spite of their circumstances. Please check out our new website to see just how we do that. Blessings, Jenny