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SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP:
A MODEL REDEFINED BY UNDERGRADUATE PHENOMENA AND
THE PENN STATE DANCE MARATHON

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Abstract

Many understand the concept of entrepreneurship, a venture undertaken by an individual, the entrepreneur, to enhance a process through determination and innovation all while turning a profit. Many are also very well versed in the importance of social responsibility, a new age concept dear to the hearts of Generation Y. An idea that is now gaining attention to many around the world is a concept combining the principals of both, a concept known as social entrepreneurship. This idea has become wildly popular as a professional venture, professional in the sense that the even though the venture may be not-for-profit, individuals are still benefiting monetarily from the venture. However, there is little research supporting the potential for a social venture to exist in a world populated entirely of volunteers – American undergraduate universities.

This thesis will look to explore the methods and definitions of current social enterprises that exist in today's global society. It will then analyze the challenges, discrepancies, and positives of these practices and look to enhance the concept of social entrepreneurship. By analyzing the ability of America's undergraduate youth, a new notion of social entrepreneurship will become apparent through application of the Penn State Dance Marathon. This new notion will shed light on an underdeveloped area and lay claim to the important role that universities and their students can play in creating social change in the United States and the world, much like the work that has been done through the Penn State Dance Marathon.

Table of Contents

A History of Social Entrepreneurship	1
Entrepreneurial Implications	2
Social and Economic Value Creation	5
The Current Model Defined	8
Current Practices of Social Entrepreneurship	9
Problems with Modern Social Entrepreneurial Theory	12
The Social Model Redefined	14
The Penn State Dance Marathon	16
Implications of the Redefined Model	28
Conclusion	29
Works Cited	31
Appendix	34

A History of Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship has become a new age phenomenon which seems to have developed as an extension of the concept of entrepreneurship. For this reason, it is important to completely understand the history and motives of the entrepreneur and how entrepreneurial activity is separate from that of a standard corporate venture. Entrepreneurial activity has been common throughout history, whether or not it has been called such. It is a term that has a universally accepted implication on starting a business venture. This definition lacks the specificity intended by the origins of the word. The term entrepreneur is commonly credited to originating via the French economist Jean Baptiste Say and is translated, literally, as someone who “undertakes” (Dees, 1998). The definition seems to fit the overarching theme that many understand the word to mean today. However, the term was used in its beginnings by Baptiste as a word to credit an individual who enhanced the economic progress of a business venture through innovation and dedication. Say claims that, “The entrepreneur shifts economic resource out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield” (Dees, 1998).

This is an important implication to consider when realizing the history and past practices of the entrepreneur. The entrepreneur truly redefines the standard enterprise associated with that practice. The entrepreneur innovates, redefines, and completely alters the landscape of a particular industry sector. It is not enough to say that an entrepreneur starts a business. Would it be innovative to open a local pizza shop on the nearest downtown street corner? Perhaps, if the process of pizza making was revolutionized so much that it completely altered the current practice of pizza making. Unfortunately, that is most likely not the case with the newly established downtown pizzeria. Therefore, it would not only be inaccurate to classify the owner as an entrepreneur, it would be unfair.

Entrepreneurial Implications

When the usage of a word comes into question, it is important to look to the work of others to help mold and reshape the idea of the word in our minds. The root of the modern theories of social entrepreneurship lay in the foundations of Say, but also give equal credit to the words of Joseph Schumpeter. It was Schumpeter who defined the entrepreneur as the change agent in the modern economy (Dees, 1998). Schumpeter argues that entrepreneurs can enact change by, “exploiting an invention or, more generally, an untried technological possibility for producing a new commodity or producing an old one a new way, by opening up a new source of supply or material or a new outlet for products, by reorganizing an industry and so on.” Clearly it is vital for the entrepreneur to bring change to a process or set of processes. It is not necessarily creating an entire new process, but it classifies an entrepreneur as someone who can think critically and alter the current landscape of a practice. Schumpeter believes that this change is what leads to economic development for the better (Dees, 1998).

Clearly the entrepreneur is opportunistic and proactive, not waiting to be challenged, but instead embracing challenge as a process for betterment. Much like I argued that starting a business is no grounds to be deemed entrepreneurial, Peter Drucker delves into the opportunism associated with the entrepreneur (Drucker, 1985). Drucker argues that the entrepreneur, “always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity.” Drucker also provides us with our first hint towards defining social entrepreneurship. He claims that entrepreneurship does not require profit motive, and that “No better text for a *History of Entrepreneurship* could be found than the creation of the modern university, and especially the modern American university” (Dees, 1998). We will explore later the implications the modern American university has on social entrepreneurship, and how it has helped redefine the social entrepreneurial model.

Howard Stevenson takes the elements of Drucker, Say, and Schumpeter even further to analyze the importance of resources. He argues that the entrepreneur must not only be opportunistic, as seen above, but must also be resourceful as to allow for, “the pursuit of opportunity without regard to resources currently controlled.” This need for resourcefulness will be especially important when considering a successful social entrepreneurial venture. Combining these elements, opportunism, resourcefulness, and innovation all lead to a more holistic view of the modern entrepreneur. It is a combination of these elements which fleshes out the ideas of Baptiste and sets the stage for a critical review of how modern theory of entrepreneurship will help define the new age phenomenon that is social entrepreneurship.

All of these findings pertain to the practice of entrepreneurship, a venture which up until this point has been solely based on a single bottom line – economic profit. While Drucker argues that the entrepreneur is not entirely profit driven, the practices he relates to lack a social implication. He references American universities, which may not be valued solely by economic value added, but must still conform to respectable business practices as to continue to function and thrive in a free-market capitalist business environment. Johanna Mair and Ingasi Marti stipulate as well that the “notion of opportunities has been widely accepted as a defining element of entrepreneurship” (Mair and Marti, 2006)

It would make sense that a social entrepreneurial venture would include some elements of the typical entrepreneur. The theories mentioned above regarding a typical entrepreneur easily lend themselves to the study of social entrepreneurship. Listing all of the qualities of an entrepreneur would be unproductive if we look to harness the scope of social entrepreneurship. These qualities mentioned have applications in the realm of social entrepreneurship. That is not to say that social entrepreneurship is defined for the sake of fitting a mold, but that certain

aspects of the entrepreneur are necessary to further understand the notion of social entrepreneurship. This is the reasoning behind first understanding, somewhat, the importance that entrepreneurship has in defining the social enterprise.

Ana Maria Peredo and Murdith McLean best summarizes Dees' understanding of the necessary entrepreneurial attributes which make for a successful social entrepreneur (Peredo & McLean, 2006). She builds it in three parts as follows: "the recognition and 'relentless' pursuit of new opportunities to further the mission of creating social value, continuous engagement in innovation and modification, and bold action undertaken without acceptance of existing resource limitations." Dees builds on the implications of the scholars listed before him, those of Say, Schumpeter, Drucker, and Stevenson (Peredo & McLean, 2006).

Before moving into the differences between social value added and economic value added, it would also do to understand that there is, technically, a difference between social enterprise and social entrepreneurship. The Northland Institute, which has goals in improving community development organizations, links social entrepreneurship to social enterprises (Peredo & McLean, 2006). The group furthers this distinction by differentiating an enterprise as a social entrepreneurial venture which has its focus on social and economic value added (Peredo & McLean, 2006). This would imply that a purely social entrepreneurial venture would focus solely on the social value added. I will argue that social value added is extremely difficult to quantify, and for that reason I will assume that social enterprise and social entrepreneurship, for the sake of this piece, are synonymous. For that reason, I will continue to use the two interchangeably, with no distinction between groups that focus purely on social value added versus focusing on economic and social value added.

Social and Economic Value Added

From what has been read and understood, the entrepreneur focuses on the economic value, profit driving devices, associated with the venture the entrepreneur is currently engaged in. With the social entrepreneur, he will focus more heavily on the social value added. As mentioned above, that is not to say that the social entrepreneur will neglect to economic impact of his practice, but the social value added will take precedence. Dees argues that social entrepreneurs are “one species in the genus of entrepreneur”. This specific subset of entrepreneurs clearly has similarities to the family that is the entrepreneur. However, this specific subset has a distinct set of difference, which distinctly separate it from that family.

Mair and Marti argue that “the concept of social entrepreneurship is still poorly defined and its boundaries to other fields of study remain fuzzy” (2006). However, the fact that one can define differences between social entrepreneurship and the more broad study of entrepreneurship refutes this claim, and gives rise to the idea that social entrepreneurship, while perhaps not perfectly defined, is clearly a distinct area of research. It remains an area of research that will continue to be built upon, and perhaps become its own “family” with specific subsets (genera) that sharpen the blurriness which Mair and Marti allude to. First, we must learn the differences between the motivators of the two causes before we define social entrepreneurship as it is represented in modern business practices.

Entrepreneurs can rely on the markets to attest to their success. Has their specific business model created economic value? If the firm is public, it is easy to reference their stock price as a simple indicator of economic prosperity. If the firm’s stock price increases, then arguably its profitability has increased. Does the entrepreneur have customers willing to purchase the firms good or firm’s service? If the answer is yes, and the firm is selling at a price

higher than its competitors with a solid customer base, then it is fair to say the venture is successful and competitive. Dees asserts that “value is created in business when customers are willing to pay more than it costs to produce the good or service being sold” (1998). Therefore it is safe to assume that profit is a reasonable indicator of an entrepreneurial venture. This argument, to a business minded individual, is very elementary, but serves the purpose for the sake of the following argument: social value added is much more difficult to assess.

To some, the only possible indicator of a successful social entrepreneur is the social outcome. Regardless of the economic value added, the social mission is the key to the cause of enterprise, and should be explicitly considered (Dees, 1998). He continues to argue that wealth is simply “a means to an end” for the social entrepreneur and that this statement implies financial impact “having no place among the goals of the undertaking” (1998) Later, Dees, Emerson & Economy state that social entrepreneurship is exclusive to the world of not-for-profit organizations and organizations “aimed at delivering some social good or service without engaging in any form of exchange” (Peredo & McLean, 2006).

This minimalistic view seems to be a bit too harsh in a world fully embracing economic, as well as social, conscientiousness. In fact, many not-for-profits, including establishments like American Universities, have a vested interest in the economic wellbeing of their enterprise. While groups like Universities to act on a social mission, there is economic impetus as well. For this reason, these economically minded not-for-profits are often referred to as “hybrids” (Davis, 1997). Fowler takes this concept a step further to argue that “integrated social entrepreneurship” the act of generating income is aimed at producing a social benefit. Therefore, the two are dependent upon one another for a venture to be considered successful. This is in contrast to a venture classified as “complementary social entrepreneurship” (Fowler, 2000) in which the

economic profits of a company do help support a social mission, but a mission unrelated to the practices of the business. This is an area which will not be further explored in this thesis, but is still necessary to acknowledge as existing.

For this thesis, the social enterprise as understood to be hybrid will be the focus of analysis. Because we will explore the practices of undergraduates pursuing social entrepreneurial activity, we must stay within the realm of the hybrid University. This is not to say that social entrepreneurship is exclusive to the not-for-profit sector. The two are not mutually exclusive. There are many cases of for-profit ventures that exist behind a social mission as well. The clothing company Patagonia is profit-driven venture which works towards social and economic value creation. Employees of the company are “encouraged to support the environmental causes closest to their hearts” (Patagonia). The company also uses “a portion of our sales to support grassroots groups working to make a real difference” (Patagonia). This type of social impact is separate from the complimentary social entrepreneurial model, because this social return is central to the mission of Patagonia as a high-end outdoor apparel company.

The markets make it simple to indicate success for an entrepreneur, but for the social entrepreneur there is no open exchange of public good, or social benefit. Dees argues that the growth and continued survival of a social enterprise do not prove the efficiency and effectiveness of the enterprise; they are instead a “weak indicator at best.” Social entrepreneurs do however operate in commodities markets, because many times social entrepreneurs compete for donations and other services. However, the competition in this market is not indicative of the success of the social entrepreneur, because the mission of the market is not that of the social entrepreneur.

In fact, some researchers have even gone as far to define social capital as “actual and potential assets embedded in relationships among individuals, communities, networks, and

societies” (Burt, 1997; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). This social capital is dissected to include structural, relational, and cognitive capital (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1992; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Structural capital refers to the structure of the networks of the venture. Relational capital references the personality of the parties involved. Finally, the cognitive capital is indicative of the commonalities of the system.

Clearly, the definition of social value is not exact, but that is not to discredit the idea of analyzing the impact of social value. The concept of social entrepreneurship is rather abstract, so it is only fitting that the idea of social value added is abstract. These contributors mentioned above are overarching, but that is because each must be generalized in order to fit the specifics of social entrepreneurship. Every enterprise, which falls within the boundaries of social entrepreneurship, will represent the ideas outlined above. It is next necessary to analyze the key factors which lay boundaries to the idea of social entrepreneurship.

The Current Model Defined

Much like there are many theories elaborating the importance of social value added and the differences in what types of ventures value the social impact, there is a range of definitions regarding what exactly social entrepreneurship is. These discrepancies lay claim to the fact that social entrepreneurship is, in fact, indefinable and the difference prevents further, explicit study of the subject. However, with an area of research in its relative infancy, it is understandable that there lacks a specific clarity when defining a model of social entrepreneurship. In fact, it may even be argued that there is no need to directly define a social entrepreneurial endeavor as long as a majority of these characteristics are met.

Dees combines the ideas and philosophies of entrepreneurship from Say, Drucker, and Stevenson to extrapolate a definition of social entrepreneurship. He claims that social

entrepreneurs are successful by (1) adopting a mission to recreate and sustain social value; (2) recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission; (3) engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; (4) acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand; (5) exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

Peredo and McLean derive a similar definition, highlighting five key areas which include, but are not limited to, creating social value, recognizing opportunity, innovating through adapting, accepting risk, and having a sense of resourcefulness. The resourcefulness outlined by Peredo and McLean is incorporated into Dees' fourth point, so it would appear that the two have gone a step less than Dees to completely define the social entrepreneur and the model the enterprise must undertake to be successful and sustain.

It is difficult to use the word sustain as loosely as it has been used. To sustain would imply the idea persists over an extended period of time, say 30 years, but the definition, at least in terms of entrepreneurial activity, is not limited to length of time. The scope of the idea is also important to consider when saying a venture will sustain. For the idea to proliferate geographic boundaries and be cause-based globally is also a key component of sustainability. Roger L. Martin and Sally Osberg touch on the necessity of scope in their remark that, "unless [the enterprise] is designed to achieve large scale or is so compelling as to launch legions of imitators and replicators, it is not likely to lead to a new superior equilibrium" (Martin and Osberg, 2007).

Current Practices of Social Entrepreneurship

There are many professional, hybrid social ventures which exist in today's economy. It is important to realize that all researched social endeavors are "professional", professional meaning the directors of the enterprises are all graduates and hold degrees in a certain field of study.

These enterprises will be explored and will highlight how they embody the sense of social entrepreneurial spirit.

Grameen Bank is perhaps the most widely known global practice of social entrepreneurship. While it may not be known for its name, the Bengali-based bank is famous for the practice of micro-lending to impoverished areas. The bank makes small loans to those in need, without requiring collateral. Grameen Bank is a perfect example of the hybrid enterprise discussed earlier in the paper. The bank is rooted in the development of impoverished clientele, but uses the profits earned on the micro-loans to continue to provide loans to others in need. This bank qualifies as a hybrid, because it has a distinct social and economic bottom line. The bank only loans to those in impoverished areas who would be unable to receive a loan from a more established lender.

Grameen Bank is also a great example of the relational capital outlined by Burt. The system of the lending relies on trust, respect and friendship (Burt 1992). Fukuyama found that when trust is established between two parties or individuals that there is an eagerness to cooperate, thus building more trust between the two groups (1997). Relational capital is essential for a social venture, when it is very difficult to quantify the social value added. One could argue that this capital is more important than the other two, because of the intangible quality associated with trust and friendship.

The Aravind Eye Care Hospital located sporadically throughout India, is another example of a hybrid social enterprise. After Dr. Govindappa Venkataswamy realized the dire need for professional care for the pandemic that was blindness in India, he took action. The mission of the hospital has a purely social backbone. However, with the extremity of the problem, Dr. Venkataswamy knew he would need to be able to make this project sustainable; sustainable in

the sense that the project would be able to continually be funded for years to come. He created the GOVEL Trust to make sure the Hospital could sustain the cost of upkeep and provide quality care at greatly reduced prices to those in great need. The Trust, however, is not what established Aravind as a hybrid social enterprise. While the hospital's main focus is the eradication of unnecessary blindness in the most densely populated country in the world, the hospital also adds social value by engaging in innovative research for ophthalmological health care.

Another international venture worth drawing attention to is SEKEM. This venture is quite unique because of the breadth of social welfare offered by the enterprise. According to its website, SEKEM, founded by Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish in Egypt in 1977, has goals to “restore and maintain the vitality of the soil as well as the biodiversity of nature.” The enterprise engages in practices which include biodynamic farming, trade, medicine, education for the disenfranchised, vocational training, and collegiate education. The reach of SEKEM not only touches on many disciplines, but has also penetrated the borders of many countries including India, Palestine, and Turkey. SEKEM looks to empower its farmers and holds monthly conference to disseminate intellectual property amongst the farmers. SEKEM transformed Egyptian society by eliminating 90% of pesticide use in Egyptian cotton fields (Mair & Marti, 2006). This ability to evoke change in a society that is lasting and innovative clearly outlines some of the qualities necessary in a social enterprise.

A company much more local and probably relatable is the American venture, Alex's Lemonade Stand. The foundation has its aims in eradicating pediatric cancer, and has become a national brand in the fight against pediatric cancer. The foundation innovates the research by empowering youth students across the country to have lemonade stands to benefit cancer research through the Foundation. This manipulation of a simple concept is a clear indicator that

Alex's Lemonade stand is a viable social enterprise. According to the foundation's website, Alex's Lemonade stand has raised just over US\$30 million since Alex, the foundation's namesake, passed away from pediatric cancer in 2004.

This last example is especially important, because it sheds light on the fact that social entrepreneurship is not limited to third-world or developing countries. Social entrepreneurship is truly needed everywhere in the world, wherever there is a cause and chance to innovate. The social aims are not intended to limit the potential influence, and social entrepreneurship can see success anywhere in the world. This is especially true in the United States, where the resources available to those wanting to make a difference are almost unlimited. The potential is truly untapped and there is much room for improvement in current practices and understandings of social entrepreneurship. One of those biggest areas comes from America's youth, who have the ability to alter the landscape of social entrepreneurship and become key players in driving social change and do so successfully.

Problems with Modern Social Entrepreneurial Theory

Although the benefits of social entrepreneurship are many to millions of individuals world-wide, that is no reason to think the idea is flawless. Just recently, much news of microfinance and the problems it either creates or enables have been discussed heavily in many media outlets. The first issue focuses, interestingly enough, on microfinance's detriment to the environment and the impoverished individuals it looks to help. Joanna Zelman writes of a report recently published by the Consultant Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP). In this report, CGAP finds that, "There are three main areas in which microenterprise activities impact the environment: unsustainable use of natural resources, pollution (air, water, and solid waste), and occupational health and safety" (Zelman, 2011). Impoverished individuals look to cheaper

resources to help run their business, often resorting to practices which damage the environment. Climate change has the greatest impact on impoverished areas, where there is a lack of ability to adapt to the change that could alter weather patterns and farming capabilities (Zelman, 2011). Clearly, the microlenders are lacking the diligence necessary to successfully complete the social change they seek to make. Education on top of micro-lending would be a progressive step which could help eliminate problems like the ones listed previously.

Another issue involves who is benefitting from microfinance. Usha Thorat writes that microfinance is becoming excessive in the amount of returns garnered to equity holder in microfinance institutions, and that the social impetus is becoming second to the economic (2011). The investors are becoming overzealous in the search for profit, and have exceeded the necessary “cost covering” to sustain the business (Thorat, 2011). The Reserve Bank of India has established a committee to set regulation on microlenders which include an increase in transparency and cap on lending and multiple loans, all in the interest of consumer protection. Clearly greed has etched its way into the social enterprise of microlending, with many arguing that if there is no chance for profit, then there is no ability to sustain. That is true to an extent; there is, however, no need for abnormal returns when the mission of a venture is to provide social well being for the disenfranchised.

Apart from the world of microfinance, there is still much work needed to be done in the development of social entrepreneurship as a legitimate, research worthy practice. As outlined by the work above, social entrepreneurship faces the same vulnerabilities that profit-drive entrepreneurship and business in general, face. It is also clearly muddled by conflicting definitions. Not only do the definitions alter in what is considered necessary for a practice to be social entrepreneurship, but there are even classification differences in social entrepreneurship.

This thesis mentioned the necessity to be purely socially inclined, a hybrid business, and a complementary enterprise.

Within the classifications, the definitions require a multitude of traits, which often lack a distinctiveness wished for by some researchers. Even if there were to be a perfect definition, some social enterprises will highlight a particular trait more so than others. This lack of consistency can be unnerving for some, and gives rise to the issue that social entrepreneurship is not a legitimate field of study. This is an issue when researching the topic, and there is still much to be decided about the viability of social entrepreneurship as a field completely independent of entrepreneurship and not just an extension.

The Social Model Redefined

History suggests that to define a topic, it must first be argued critically and thoroughly, even then there is still room for an idea to be improved. There is no proving the perfect model of social entrepreneurship, one can only argue for one's model to be accepted as the best possible means of defining the idea of social entrepreneurship.

For the entirety of this thesis thus far, professional social entrepreneurial ventures have been analyzed. The definitions of researchers mentioned above have been reinforced by commenting on these professional ventures. For-profit and not-for-profit ventures have been talked about, all being headed by individuals who make their living based off of the work they do for these professional ventures. Many of the ideas were initiated by doctors, who by definition have completed school and are now active members of the global work force. American universities were briefly mentioned, but will now become the focus of the remainder of this thesis.

American universities, and similarly universities around the world, have a resource not able to be found in any of the social enterprises researched thus far – students. Students provide a unique advantage over employees in social entrepreneurship. Employees require compensation even when the social enterprise is a hybrid and emphasizes the social mission of the enterprise. While students can maintain jobs and earn salaries, when the need to enact social change is manifested in a student body, the need for compensation is eliminated. The cause becomes the driving force behind the motivation to succeed, even if the social venture has an economic element included in its mission.

I would argue that Dees' definition of social entrepreneurship, (1) adopting a mission to recreate and sustain social value; (2) engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; (3) acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand; (4) exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created, is lacking a key piece which is highlighted by the success of social enterprise seen at American universities, specifically The Pennsylvania State University and the Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon. To further the definition outlined by Dees, I would argue that there is a need for a tangible motivator for a venture to be successful and sustain. There needs to be a direct relationship to the cause in order for the venture to sustain. Without that link to the root of the social mission, problems like those faced by microfinance will materialize and detract from the social value added. The definition should also include the scope of the issue as outlined by Martin and Osburg. The enterprise must enact change outside of the boundaries of the enterprises geographic origins. If the idea does not create change nationally, then the concept lacks the ingenuity to be considered a social enterprise.

This model becomes possible when those furthering the mission of the enterprise are comprised completely of volunteers, and there are no profit-driving motivations for personal gain. This distinction is very narrow, but with the development of further research into an area of study, it is narrow distinctions like these which help to compromise a working model and add to the legitimacy of the research done. The study of social entrepreneurship is still widely phenomenon driven (Mair & Marti, 2006) and the Penn State Dance Marathon is one such phenomenon. After further study of the enterprise, it will be clear that the concept provides a clear methodology for successful implantation and proliferation in universities throughout the world.

The Penn State Dance Marathon

The Penn State Dance Marathon (THON) consists of roughly 15,000 college students across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Beginning in 1973, THON had its aims in providing funds to a charity locally based near The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) in State College, Pennsylvania. THON raises funds annually and is culminated in a 46-hour no sitting, no sleeping dance marathon in February. While it took four years to find a solidified partnership, THON raises money to battle pediatric cancer. The sole beneficiary of THON is The Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital in Hershey, PA. THON has become an undergraduate phenomenon, raising millions of dollars over its 39 year history to battle pediatric cancer. Figure 1 outlines the monetary growth THON has seen since its inception. It clearly outlines the fact that THON, with a few yearly exceptions, has seen enormous positive growth in its 39 year history.

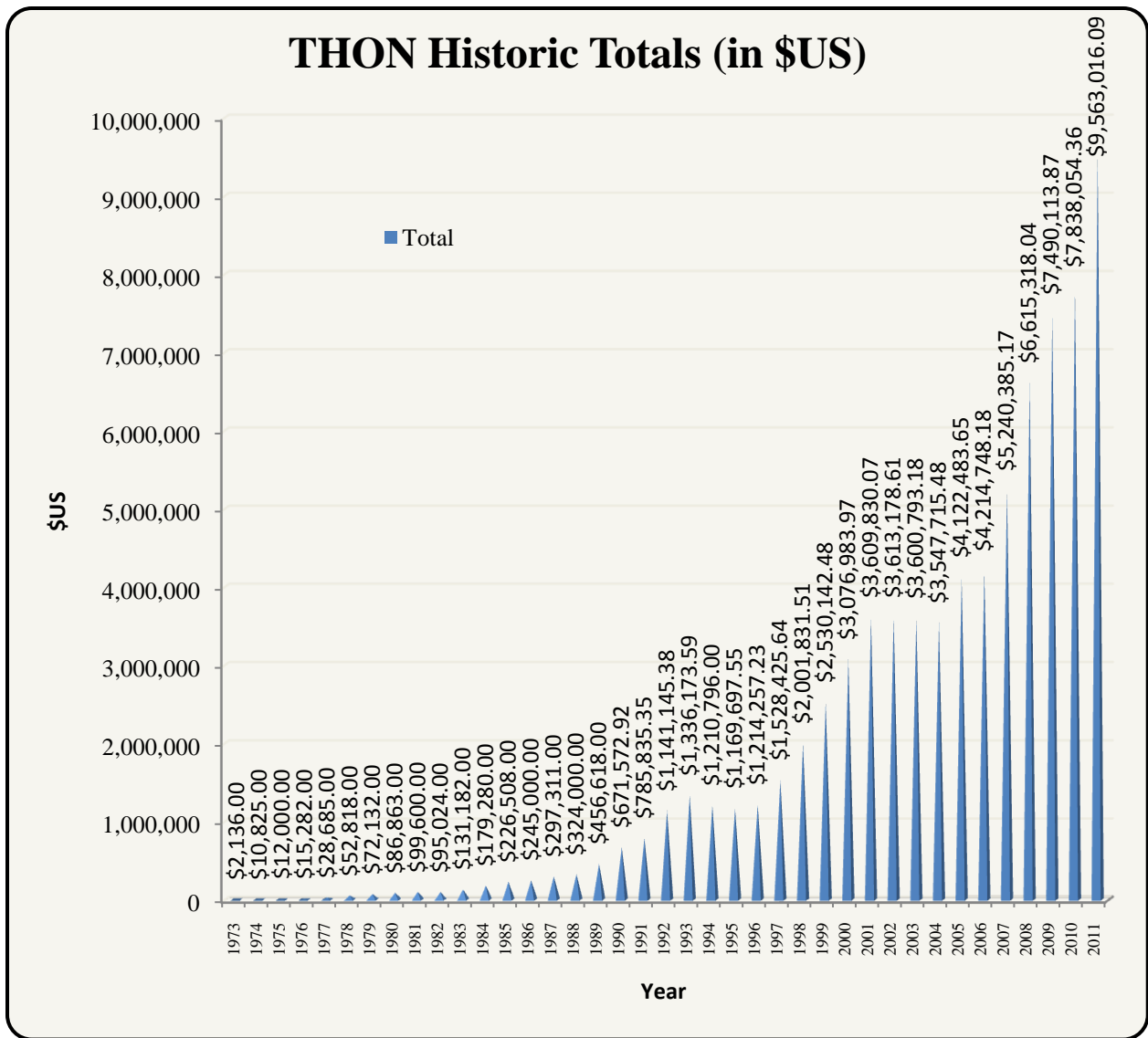


Figure 1 THON Monetary Growth; source: <http://alumni.libraries.psu.edu/>

As mentioned above, THON is comprised entirely of undergraduate students, studying at The Pennsylvania State University. The University, headquartered in University Park, PA, is made up of 19 commonwealth, or satellite campuses as well as 5 special mission campuses, which include graduate programs and vocational programs. All of these campuses are able to participate in Penn State’s Dance Marathon. It is estimated that roughly 15,000 students

participate in some capacity each year, although data, like the number of students registered to receive e-mail updates from THON, suggest that the number is greater.

THON's structure is clearly outlined in Figure 2. The Overall Chairperson is at the head of the organizational hierarchy and directly responsible for the actions of all THON volunteers. The Overall Chairperson directly oversees the Overall Committee and THON Weekend Dancers. The Overall Committee is comprised of 14 committees, not including the Overall Chair. Refer to the appendix for a detailed description of each committee's responsibilities. The Overall Chair is indirectly responsible for overseeing the Organizations who act independently of THON. Organizations consist of all clubs registered as such according to Penn State University guidelines.

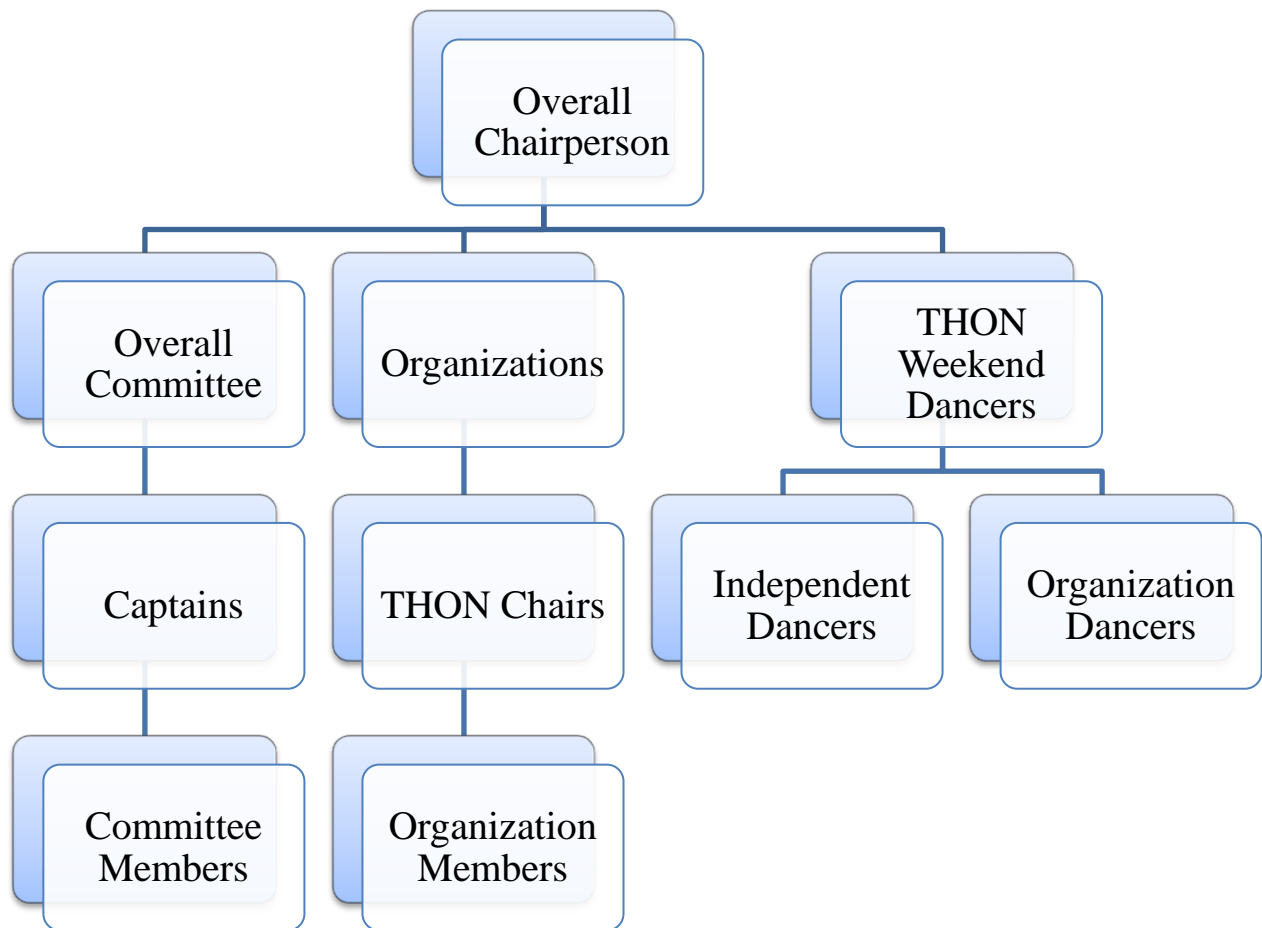


Figure 2 THON Organizational Structure

The Overall Committee sets guidelines for the year for all of THON's volunteers. These guidelines establish fundraising policy, as well as event planning for various events held throughout the year. Official THON events held during the year include the THON 5K run, a carnival held on campus, as well as THON Weekend, which is a 46-hour event held in the Bryce Jordan Center on University Park's campus.

According to The Four Diamonds Fund Annual Report in 2009, THON was the largest contributor to The Fund, comprising 67.7% of The Fund's total raised for the fiscal year. That total amounted to US\$ 7,093,778. THON has a unique influence with The Fund and its Advisory Board. The Overall Chair holds a non-voting seat on the Advisory Board, and is crucial in influencing the future of The Fund and its cancer fighting team. There is a blurred line between The Fund and THON, as both play a major role in the fight against pediatric cancer. It is not important to see how THON fits the newly created social entrepreneurship model, which I argue has been instrumental in THON's success as a philanthropy and social enterprise. The argument stems from a year spent as the Overall Donor and Alumni Relations Chairperson for THON 2011.

Adopting a mission to recreate and sustain social value: The mission of the Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon is to conquer pediatric cancer by providing outstanding emotional and financial support to the children, families, researchers and staff of The Four Diamonds Fund. THON's mission is explicit and clear. THON creates social value by helping to offset all financial costs to families battling pediatric cancer. Therefore, families who would otherwise be unable to afford cancer treatment for their children are able to do so, in part because of the funds raised by students participating in THON. The emotional support provided by the students to these families is also crucial in their successful treatments. It is almost impossible to

quantify this emotional support, but the words of families affected by the treatment help to outline the importance of THON as an emotional reprieve more so than a fundraising machine.

The power of emotional support is overwhelming, and truly has a role in helping the children benefiting from the support of THON beat cancer. Celeste Bush, a mother a child being treated at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital, says that, "The 6 months before our first THON were the most difficult months of our life. [THON] day gave us hope to fight cancer." Equally as powerful and representative of the power of THON's emotional support, Judy Hoch, mother of a child treated at Hershey, but who lost his battle, says that, "[THON] made all the difference in this journey because you didn't just help treat his cancer. [THON] treated his soul. [THON] treated our souls, and continue to do so since 1994." Clearly the impact THON has on the emotional well beings of the families and children fighting pediatric cancer is above average, and outlines the importance of the social impact. This social impact is much greater than any amount of money raised.

Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning: The nature of THON's volunteer base almost guarantees that this requirement is met yearly. By nature of being a student, one can only participate in THON while an undergraduate. Undergraduate degrees at Penn State are designed to last for eight semesters of study, or four years. Some students do elect to stay for a fifth year to fulfill degree requirements. For this reason, the amount of time being able to devote work to THON is limited. A new group of students is chosen each year to lead the Overall Committee and THON into the future.

THON 2011 is no exception to this high rate of turnover. The newest Overall Committee was innovative in its fundraising strategy for the THON fundraising year. The first example of this is the change in THON's letter writing campaign. For the past four years, THON has

undertaken a 600,000 piece letter writing campaign relying on a written letter soliciting donations to be returned in a plain, blue remittance envelope. This year, the remittance envelope was enhanced to be multi-colored and include an image of THON to entice people to donate more money. This decision came to be after working with industry professionals who were able to ensure that many individuals are more likely to donate to an emotionally charged image, rather than nothing at all. THON's individual check total, the indicator of a successful letter writing campaign saw a 6.0645% increase from THON 2010 to THON 2011. While the entire total increase cannot solely be credited to the updated remittance envelope, it was a contributing factor.

THON also took advantage of a recent trend in fundraising by implementing a text-to-give campaign at THON Weekend. By working with Penn State Development officials, THON was able to create a code and encourage donations via text message. This trend is particularly well known in the professional world. The company mGive, which managed the Red Cross text giving efforts in Haiti and also managed the Super Bowl text giving campaign, advised the Overall Committee on how to successfully implement a text giving campaign. A premier company to work with, the employers of mGive highlighted the fact that higher education was an untapped resource for text giving, and THON would be their first experiment into the field of higher education giving. This innovative fundraising technique, while not created by THON, was instrumental in fulfilling our mission of outstanding emotional and financial support. The campaign witnessed 2,706 unique donors, which is impressive considering the fundraising campaign had exhausted efforts until that point.

THON also utilizes a very unique method of fundraising known as "canning." Canning consists of students traveling throughout the Northeastern United States and soliciting via

canister solicitation. This past year, the Overall Committee updated its canning materials, which include large two-foot by four-foot posters. These posters were updated to highlight the importance of the cause by stating in bold, “Help Kids Fight Cancer.” Previously the posters had emphasized the University. After consulting marketing professors at the University, we were assured that successful marketing campaigns draw attention to the cause.

THON clearly innovates and adapts continuously. Whether it be internally motivated or with the help of professional individuals, the students involved in THON seek to change for the better wherever and whenever possible.

Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand: Being student-run creates a plethora of problems when managing a social enterprise such as THON. The biggest difficulty lies in the fact that there is little trust of college students soliciting funds for a project as seemingly overwhelming as pediatric cancer. For this reason, students fundraising for THON are educated by the Captains about the benefits of THON and what the organization is doing to combat cancer. Educating a volunteer base of 15,000 students is daunting, but necessary in order to ensure a successful enterprise. By saturating the Northeastern United States while canning, students spread awareness of pediatric cancer. This is when the knowledge of THON is spread to those unfamiliar with our mission. This word of mouth tool is essential for a philanthropy who operates on an annual budget of less than US\$500,000.

This limited budget is also extremely limiting to THON. THON is entirely self-sufficient and receives no funds from the University or student government, the only organization to lack monetary support at Penn State. THON is able to use this as a motivator for success. It also adds to THON’s efficiency. Through the work of the Supply Logistics (SL), responsible for in-kind donations, and Hospitality, responsible for food and beverage donations, committees THON is

well above the benchmark for a highly efficient philanthropy. Operating efficiency represents the percentage of funds that are donated directly to the cause, thus excluding operational and administrative costs. The American Institute of Philanthropy (AIP) cites any charity that operates above a 75% efficiency as highly efficient (charitywatch.org). According to the most recently available data, THON 2010 donated 92.41% of funds raised to The Four Diamonds Fund (thon.org). This percentage is well above the benchmark set by the AIP.

With no funding available, the SL and Hospitality committees are charged with acquiring donations to keep operating costs as low as possible for THON. Clearly, the groups are successful and are able to offer a wide range of promotional benefits to partnering companies. The estimated value of these in-kind donations is around \$500,000. Clearly this amount of money, if spent out-of-pocket, would clearly reduce THON's operating efficiency and decrease the success of our philanthropy. This estimated cost of in-kind donations is not factored into the totals raised annually by THON's volunteers.

The Hospitality committee is able to provide 25 meals to roughly 1,500 individuals throughout the 46-hour dance marathon without spending a single cent on food. This committee also supplies all food and beverage needs to participants at the THON 5K run and carnival, which together account for roughly 1,000 individuals. All of this food is donated through the work of student-volunteers, who receive no compensation for their efforts other than the knowledge that they are making a difference in the life of a child with pediatric cancer. No class credit, or money is given to the students who volunteer to support THON and its mission.

Even in light of a troubled economy, THON perseveres with the social mission at the heart of every decision. During the recent economic recession, THON 2009 Overall Chairperson Mike Hacke is quoted in The Four Diamonds Fund Annual Report as saying, "We never let the

economy worry us. We set our sights, not on the money, but on helping the kids.” THON 2009 saw another record breaking total.

Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created: THON is a social enterprise which supports children ranging in ages from infancy to 21 years old in their fight against pediatric cancer. It is a philanthropy which primarily benefits children. For this reason, the image that THON has amongst volunteers, beneficiaries, and uninvolved parties is taken extremely seriously. Every decision THON makes is symbolized by THON’s unofficial motto, For The Kids. THON consciously makes decisions in the best interest of the kids and their families. This is a fact that is easy to say, but hard to materialize.

However, THON has very strict rules established concerning the origins of donations. No fundraiser is able to be held in an establishment which primarily sells alcoholic beverages. Therefore, no fundraisers can be held by students in bars, regardless of the legal age of the student. Alcohol, especially at the undergraduate level, has a very negative stigma associated with it. Therefore, to keep the image of THON pure, the policy has been established. Similarly, no donations are permitted through the sale of alcohol. If a group is hosting a fundraiser in a restaurant, there are explicit limitations regarding the funds donated. THON will only allow donations from the sale of food and non-alcoholic beverages, no other source of revenue.

The Rules and Regulations Committee is charged with policing the implementation, promotion and running of all fundraisers. Every potential fundraiser must be submitted to the Rules and Regulations Committee to be thoroughly vetted before approval is given or denied. While the alcoholic limitations are a constant and enforced universally to all participating groups, there are many scenarios which are not as clear. For this reason, detailed fundraiser reports are necessary which ask the parties responsible for planning to outline in detail their

plans for the fundraiser. If any of the details are in conflict with the mission and values of THON, the fundraiser is denied or altered to conform to those values.

No amount of money is worth compromising the integrity of THON and its core values. Clearly, if every fundraiser was allowed to be held, THON's yearly totals would be higher than what the graph in Exhibit 1 shows. However, the amount of money raised does not take precedence in the eyes of THON's volunteers, which clearly outlines THON's status as a hybrid social enterprise. We work towards an economic result, but the social value THON creates with the families of The Fund is ultimately priceless.

Necessitating a tangible motivator present at the root of the cause: As mentioned many times throughout the explanation of the benefits of THON and its potential to alter the landscape of social entrepreneurship, the families of The Four Diamonds Fund and THON are the root of the social enterprise. The Family Relations Committee is responsible for providing inspiration and keeping the emotional aspect of THON as the driving force behind the fundraising efforts of Penn State students throughout the year. Currently, there exists a program known as Adopt-A-Family. Through this program organizations are paired with a family that is undergoing pediatric cancer treatment at Hershey Children's Hospital. Often times, organizations are paired with multiple families.

The bond made with these families is not limited to the duration of the treatment. Many groups at Penn State are paired with families whose child is "cured" of cancer. While there is no cure for cancer, the medical benchmark is a remission period of five years to be considered "cured." There still exists no cure for pediatric cancer, but THON has its mission in eliminating the disease. Penn State organizations are also paired with families who have children that lost their battle with cancer, but still remain connected to the students and act as a source of

inspiration perhaps greater than any other for the students who are privileged to meet these families.

THON and The Fund help treat families from Central Pennsylvania. For this reason, every family that is touched by THON is within driving distance of the students they have met. This close geographic proximity provides students the ability to build relationships with these families while studying at Penn State. This unique opportunity is indicative of the ability for THON to create change in the concept of cancer treatment. So often, children being treated for cancer at other hospitals throughout the country go through the process without the emotional support of an organization like THON. Sherri Caruthers, Four Diamonds staff member and parents of a child treated for cancer at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital is quoted saying, "...we were blessed to have the support of the THON student; they made such a big difference in our family's lives." Without this ability to be motivated by the tangible aspect of family interaction, THON would not be as successful as it has been.

Ability to impact a large scale audience: While the practices of THON are limited to the Central Pennsylvania region and students at Penn State, the ideas and possibilities are not so. THON is the most successful student run philanthropy in the United States, and arguably the world, in terms of dollars raised per year. With a record \$US 9,563,016.09 raised for THON 2011, it stands far and above the next closest student-run philanthropy located at the Indiana University, which raised US\$1,602,713.20 for children with infectious diseases at Riley Children's Hospital in Indiana (iudm.org). In fact, student organizers of Indiana University Dance Marathon are in communication with the THON Overall Committee asking for advice and learning more about how our philanthropy operates.

The Communications Committee is responsible for reaching out and maintaining contact

with other universities who express interest in creating or bettering dance marathons. THON may not be educating universities throughout the country on how to battle pediatric cancer. However, THON spreads its structure and institutionalized knowledge about how college students can successfully make an impact in their communities. For this reason, THON is reaching out beyond the borders of Central Pennsylvania to educate other undergraduate students about the ability to create social value in their respective locations. The ability to enact social change is the true value THON creates when communicating with other universities. THON has created a successful model of social entrepreneurship and the reasons recently outlined are indicative of that.

However, THON's reach is two-fold. While THON impacts social change in other universities, albeit not always concerning pediatric cancer, it also impacts the landscape of pediatric cancer. Students who can do so in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York, Connecticut, Ohio, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and Washington D.C. Every time a student collects a donation from an individual, that student is spreading pediatric cancer awareness. Awareness is the first and most important step in bringing about change to an issue. Without individuals knowing that pediatric cancer is a national issue which does not receive the attention it deserves, then the funds raised are less meaningful.

It is also important to understand that the funds THON raise assist in cancer research. In 2004, the THON Overall Committee pledged \$US 10 million over the course of seven years to construct a brand new pediatric hematology/oncology ward at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. Pediatric cancer research does not just benefit the children undergoing treatment in pediatric cancer, but it benefits every child in the world diagnosed with cancer. THON clearly has the potential to impact social change based on its mission and enable other universities to do

the same regardless of the cause. However, that cause must include a tangible motivator for the enterprise to be successful and meet the other outlined necessities to be considered social enterprise.

Implications of the Redefined Model

While the social and medical implications have been outlined above, there is still one more implication that should consider when discussing social entrepreneurship at universities across the country – the used of the social enterprise as a recruiting tool. Much of a universities success stems from the institutions ability to retain engaged students and make them engaged alumni. The easiest and most direct way for an alumnus to stay involved is to donate back to the University. THON helps create that culture of giving on campus, and lays a foundation for future giving.

A successful, well established social enterprise on a college's campus also can impact the ability to recruit high school graduates to attend that specific school. THON has become a tradition at Penn State and is embedded in the Penn State culture. It often times can sway a student to attend Penn State over another comparable school that lacks the same extracurricular opportunity. Ventures like THON enable a university to market social good will not only as a meaningful opportunity, but also as a way to develop leadership, which is becoming an increasingly important quality in many professional recruiters who look to hire college graduates.

Social enterprises also help fulfill a universities mission of knowledge creation. Universities obviously aim to educate students who attend and empower these students to be better world citizens. Therefore, universities should be stewards of welfare as well as stewards of knowledge. The logic behind this argument being that knowledge should essentially cause

welfare to improve not suffer. A university is achieving its goal of knowledge creation while impacting society positively, apart from the education of the youth of America. Clearly there is much benefit to a university that encourages and fosters the development of an undergraduate social enterprise.

Conclusion

THON has created a model of social entrepreneurship unlike any other in the country. By combining the dedication of cause-driven students, who lack a financial motivation, with innovative fundraising methods and a large geographic footprint, THON has established a model that can be adapted by other universities across the country. This thesis sheds light on an otherwise underdeveloped area of social entrepreneurship. It brings issue to a unique subset of individuals who create social and economic value often times completely independent of their course of study and professional aspirations.

This one instance is not proof that social entrepreneurship at universities is the desired model to impact society and add value both socially and economically. It is, however, a strong case for success based upon the current practices of THON and the venture's historic and continued success. In this instance, success was measured as a total dollar amount fundraised coupled with a healthy social impact in which families battling pediatric cancer had been positively impacted by THON. In fact, many families cite THON as life changing and a blessing not to be taken for granted.

This unique subset analyzed aids in legitimizing the study of social entrepreneurship as a viable research topic. The concern is that social entrepreneurship is in fact just a subset study of entrepreneurship. However, as the number of subsets of social entrepreneurship, become apparent, the more impressive the subject appears to become. Delving into the complexities of

the topic must continue for social entrepreneurship to improve and become more practiced.

Highlighting the benefits of creating a social enterprise is essential for the concept to be adopted more frequently.

Certainly, the challenges associated with social entrepreneurship remain so. This thesis looked at the effects of pure volunteerism and how that specific attribute can positively affect a social enterprise. This volunteerism is contingent on the fact that all volunteers are currently undergraduate students, who yet lack the need for a profession to subsidize the well being of the student. As with any argument, especially those concerning social entrepreneurship, there are exceptions to that argument. Further study analyzing different types of social ventures in universities across the country is necessary to see if different motivators result in different outcomes of enterprises. THON has been established for almost 40 years, perhaps the growth is not as ideal as is now considered. The growth could also be seen as slow and inhibiting, when the need for social change could need to be expedited.

Regardless of the research that will continue into the future, THON has established itself as the premier student-run social enterprise. By capitalizing on a unique character trait, THON has sustained and continues to impact society by increasing its social and economic capital. Only the future will be able to validate the arguments in this thesis, and further study will help accomplish that. Social entrepreneurship is an exciting field which combines the best practices of business with a chance to impact the world and lives of others positively. For that reason, the intrigue will only heighten and social entrepreneurship will hopefully become a desired method of business that is more popular than it is today.

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Appendix

Communications

Our Mission

The mission of the Communications Committee is to serve as the main liaison to all THON volunteers within the Penn State community. By building strong relationships, we work to educate and empower the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of our University as to how they can make a greater impact in the fight to cure pediatric cancer. The hundreds of student organizations that support THON rely on Communications to give them the right information and tools they need to accomplish their goals for the year.

What We Do

The Communications Captains spread THON's message to all Penn State students, organizations, faculty, staff, and alumni by supplying them with the tools and information they need to provide financial and emotional support to the children, families, researchers, and staff of The Four Diamonds Fund. Communications Captains also staff the THON Office every weekday

Donor & Alumni Relations

Our Mission

The mission of the Donor & Alumni Relations Committee is to empower, motivate, and educate the THON community to increase awareness of pediatric cancer and to fundraise effectively. It is our goal to help THON continue its monetary and emotional contribution to the Four Diamonds Fund by maintaining and building relationships with THON's individual, small business, corporate, and foundation donors.

What We Do

The Donor & Alumni Relations Captain Committee strives to spread awareness of THON by making each experience unique for every donor. They will have an opportunity to share their passion for THON through professional contacts at small businesses, corporations, and foundations. Each Captain will act as a fundraising liaison to a group of organizations. As a fundraising resource, the DAR Captains will be able to assist THON Chairs as they organize and implement a donor solicitation strategy in addition to contacting businesses themselves. Some DAR Captains will also be given Committee members to help with their specific tasks. DAR is truly an unforgettable experience!

Entertainment

Our Mission

The mission of the Entertainment Committee is to provide and ensure the highest level of excitement, quality, and safety in all music, productions, and live events during THON Weekend and at every THON event and production throughout the year.

What We Do

Entertainment Captains have the unique opportunity to spread THON spirit throughout Penn State and its surrounding communities. The Entertainment Captains work hard to ensure the highest quality entertainment is brought to the stage and screen at every THON event throughout the year. THON Skate and THON Band Bash are two of several events Entertainment holds during the year to raise money For The Kids and spread the spirit of THON. During THON Weekend, responsibilities include but are not limited to stage set-up, the Pre-THON show, stage and camera shifts, Entertainment events, bands, Athlete Hour, Pep Rally, and post-THON stage teardown.

Family Relations

Our Mission

The mission of the Family Relations Committee is to provide year round assistance and support to The Four Diamonds Families by ensuring that they enjoy all of their THON experiences to the fullest. Family Relations is committed to the well being of the Four Diamonds Families, keeping students informed and inspired, and working alongside the rest of THON's Committees to ensure that the families remain at the heart of THON and everything is done For The Kids.

What We Do

The Family Relations Committee upholds the emotional aspect of THON's mission statement. Family Relations works to support the families and share their inspiration with the entire THON community. Additionally, Family Relations plans family events throughout the THON season, and weekend events such as the Family Variety Show and Four Diamonds Fashion Show.

Finance

Our Mission

The mission of the Finance Committee is to attain accurate totals of all monetary donations collected by organizations and independents on behalf of THON. It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to support the students of Penn State in both their fundraising efforts and the tracking of their monetary totals. Finance is also responsible for finalizing the THON Weekend total: a sum of the University's year-long effort to raise money in support of the families, doctors, and researchers of the Four Diamonds and the fight against pediatric cancer.

What We Do

The Finance Captains are responsible for tracking THON's total throughout the fundraising season. Captains work to count all monetary donations, manage checks and pledges, as well as assist THON Chairs and donors with all financial needs. Finance is the coordinator of Canning Drop Offs following the four fundraising weekends. Finance Captains also work in the THON Office weekly to aid in the tracking of daily donations.

Hospitality

Our Mission

The Hospitality Committee strives to fuel THON through service and support for the families, dancers, and volunteers. We act as a face of THON to the community and sponsors by procuring donations for THON events throughout the year. Hospitality works to represent THON at all times with enthusiasm, passion, and commitment For The Kids!

What We Do

The main responsibility of the THON Hospitality Committee is to acquire and serve all food and beverages during THON Weekend and at pre-THON events. Thus, many Captains will work to procure these donations and all Captains will serve them at various THON events. Each Hospitality Captain will be assigned a co-Captain and select a committee. They will run Committee meetings, train Committee Members, and prepare them for THON Weekend and other pre-THON events. In addition the Captains will be responsible for helping with other fun Hospitality events like Pink Shirt Orientation, Committee Retreat Day, and the Committee Competition. Each Captain will be responsible for numerous tasks during THON Weekend, including leading in the organization and execution of several meals.

Merchandise

Our Mission

The mission of the Merchandise Committee is to support the Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon by spreading awareness of THON and pediatric cancer through quality products and to protect the name of THON while contributing to the financial efforts For The Kids.

What We Do

The Merchandise Captains promote awareness of THON and raise money For The Kids by running the THON Store at sales throughout the year, during THON Weekend and through online orders. They are also responsible for marketing the THON Store, designing new products, distributing 100 Days and THON Weekend on-duty shirts, and handling all licensing issues.

Morale

Our Mission

The Mission of the Morale Committee is to provide physical and emotional support for the Dancers THON Weekend. The Morale Committee also extends its energy and extroversion to the THON Community throughout the entire year.

What We Do

The Morale Captains strive to ensure that throughout the year, THON love and energy is being shared amongst all of those involved in the organization. Captains, along with their committees, promote different events and ensure the spirit of the THON community is constantly felt. Together with their committees, Captains also plan a variety of events to please every dancer during THON Weekend, including the WALK, Dancer Storage, Mail Call, the many Theme Hours and The Line Dance. Throughout the 46 hours, the Captains and Committee members are dedicated to the dancers, doing anything within their power to ensure the dancers finish the weekend.

OPPerations

Our Mission

The mission of the OPPerations committee is to create and maintain a healthy and safe environment for the Four Diamonds Families and the rest of the THON community. Through great dedication and hard work, the OPPerations committee logistically plans and prepares for a year of events culminating in the transformation of the Bryce Jordan Center into THON's home.

What We Do

OPPerations Captains will work hard all year long to logistically plan and prepare for all pre-THON events, culminating in THON Weekend where we transform the Bryce Jordan Center into the home of the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. Much of the work OPP does is behind the scenes and is essential for a fun and safe THON. OPP Captains are responsible for setting up, maintaining and tearing down all THON events with the help of their Lieutenant Captains and Committee Members. Come THON Weekend, OPP Captains will ensure that for all 46 hours, the dancers, families, and volunteers are safe and enjoying the magic of THON. A strong work ethic and positive attitude are essential to OPP's success because it consists of a lot of physical but extremely rewarding hard work. With their inspiration and dedication, OPP Captains will work to bring together a committee of 35 enthusiastic volunteers. OPP is embodied by our motto: "We come first, we leave last!"

Public Relations

Our Mission

The mission of the Public Relations Committee is to conquer pediatric cancer by serving as the voice of THON to those outside of the Penn State Community. This Committee strives to educate the public about The Four Diamonds Fund, pediatric cancer, and the Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon on a local, state, and national level.

What We Do

The Public Relations Committee helps THON by spreading awareness about pediatric cancer, THON Weekend, and The Four Diamonds Fund, outside of the THON and the Penn State Community. We continue to promote THON's mission of conquering pediatric cancer by informing new and different sources, while ensuring that our current donors, supporters, and volunteers remain informed. In order to continue THON's increasing growth, it is critical for the Public Relations Committee to find creative outlets for event planning and promotions, as well as establishing new contacts that will help advertise our cause and encourage others to become more involved.

Rules and Regulations

Our Mission

The Rules and Regulations committee is devoted to providing safety and security to the families and kids by creating an infrastructure of love and support. The leaders in red will wholeheartedly care for the cause with the determination necessary to protect the integrity of and ensure the future of THON.

What We Do

The Rules and Regulations Committee prevents and responds to breaches in safety and security at a number of events including the THON 5K, Family Carnival, and THON Weekend. With Rules and Regulations present, families, dancers, and spectators can feel at ease knowing help is just around the corner. Efforts of the Committee span from regulating security within the Bryce Jordan Center to registering guests through the event Pass Access System to educating the student body on safe and effective solicitation practices. Most of all, Rules and Regulations strives to create a strong sense of community while ensuring the prosperity of THON For The Kids.

Special Events

Our Mission

The mission of the Special Events Committee is to inspire, inform, and unite the THON community by developing and continuing a variety of events to spread the spirit of THON year-round.

What We Do

The Special Events Captain Committee seeks to maintain excitement in the THON community as a year-round philanthropy through planning and executing the annual THON 5K, Family Carnival, and the Road To THON Celebration and other innovative events developed throughout the year while ensuring the spirit of THON is felt at all times. Special Events also in charge of the THON Museum displayed THON Weekend.

Supply Logistics

Our Mission

It is the mission of the Supply Logistics Committee to serve The Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon by acquiring all in-kind donations for THON Weekend and all THON events. It is our goal to help THON continue its monetary and emotional contribution to The Four Diamonds Fund by ensuring that each Committee receives the supplies they need, while spreading knowledge of THON and pediatric cancer to every donor we come in contact with during the journey.

What We Do

Supply Logistics is responsible for obtaining all in-kind donations for all events and activities leading up to and including THON Weekend. This Committee allows Captains to spread their passion of THON to every donor they contact, as well as spread awareness of THON's mission to conquer pediatric cancer to donors that range from small businesses to big corporations. Through this Committee we acquire the supplies needed to make THON happen from plates to feed the dancers to transforming the walk to toys for the kids to play with. In addition, Supply Logistics is also in charge of events like the THON Raffle, The Student Book Store promotion, and Dancer Bags. We work hard year round to maintain strong relationships with our donors, and contact new ones to get all the supplies needed to make THON events possible. Supply Logistics is a great Committee if you love to share your passion of THON with someone who may have never heard of our mission.

Technology

Our Mission

The mission of the Technology Committee is to assist the other thirteen Committees by providing effective and efficient technical solutions and support to aid in the mission of The Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon of conquering pediatric cancer. Technology strives to take advantage of the latest technologies to spread awareness of pediatric cancer and The Four Diamonds Fund.

What We Do

Every Committee in THON uses technology in some way, and the Technology Committee is there to make sure all of THON's gadgets still work. Tech is responsible for the administration of the THON Store website, the Pass System, THINK, and of course THON.org. Oh, and we do the 5K Robots. Being on Tech will give you great experience with technology and a unique view of all different aspects of THON.

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EDUCATION

- The Pennsylvania State University, Schreyer Honors College, University Park, PA
Bachelor of Science, Smeal College of Business, Finance, May 2011

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- **GE Capital**, Stamford, CT June 2010 – August 2010
FMP Intern, FX Controllership
 - Managed exposure of FX derivative earnings volatility associated with hedge accounting
 - Validated FAS 133 hedge accounting in 34 currencies by reviewing legal entities in current derivative portfolio
 - Updated current MS Excel models related to legal equity analysis to enhance and expedite team functionality
 - Worked closely with 5-member FX team to accurately produce operative results
- **UGI Energy Services Gasmark**, Wyomissing, PA June 2009 – August 2009
Business Intern, Office of the Controller
 - Monitored lines of credit for 500 largest customers
 - Depreciated assets according to MACRS brackets for all current projects
 - Reconciled various accounts receivable and accounts payable

LEADERSHIP

Penn State Dance Marathon

- **Overall Donor and Alumni Relations Chairperson** April 2010 - Present
 - Selected as one of 15 executive board members of the largest student-run philanthropy in the world
 - Served as leader of 25 Captains (Project Managers) and 100 Committee Members (Project Leads) responsible for benefitting more than 77,000 monetary donors in support of The Four Diamonds Fund at Hershey Medical Center
 - Stewarded relationships with individual, small business, and corporate donors, specifically those who donate more than \$10,000
 - Coordinated a 275,000-piece letter writing campaign
 - Worked closely with senior University Administrators and Office of Annual Giving to implement and innovate effective fundraising strategies
- **Family Relations Captain** September 2009 – April 2010
 - Selected as one of 20 Captains (Project Managers) responsible for planning five of THON's most notable events
 - Served as primary contact for families of the world's largest student-run philanthropy benefitting pediatric cancer patients, which raised more than \$7.83 million

Penn State Alumni Association

- **Penn State Lion Ambassadors** January 2009 - Present
 - Served as liaison between alumni and current student body
 - Organized campus events on behalf of the Penn State Alumni Association, the largest dues paying Association of its kind
 - Connected Penn State's history and personality to community members and prospective students

Penn State Athletics

- **Men's Varsity Swimming** August 2007 – May 2008
 - Recruited walk-on as sprint freestyler

OTHER EXPERIENCE

- **Recreation Hall**, Event Staff, State College, PA January 2009 – Present

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Dean's List: Fall 2007, 2008, 2009
- Society of Distinguished Alumni Mentoring Program
- Mentoring with Honors