

Inaugural Award of Distinction 2005

Colin Glassco '61

After a successful career in business, Colin Glassco was drawn ever deeper into the world of philanthropy until 1996, when he founded the Colin Glassco Charitable Foundation for Children. Today, Mr. Glassco spends the majority of his time providing organizational assistance for projects and convincing others to join him in his quest to improve the lives of children.



Mr. Glassco attended Hillfield College, a predecessor of HSC, for what he calls the “formative years” - Grades 1 through 9.

“The school on Main Street was a real community. That community spirit fostered a sense of being aware of others.”

Colin Glassco

Mr. Glassco takes that message a step further, maintaining that everyone can make a difference in the lives of others. Mr. Glassco certainly does.

Colin Glassco is very much a “hands-on” philanthropist, travelling to Zambia at least once a year. The Foundation provides funding to numerous projects there, ranging from orthopedic surgery, school supplies, cataract surgery and the introduction of lighting to villages and homes. His passion for all of this work is clear but the Foundation’s Trachoma Project seems to be particularly close to his heart.

Trachoma, a bacterial disease spread through contaminated water, is the largest preventable cause of a very painful form of blindness found in Africa. The infection rate is as high as 45% amongst children.

The Foundation’s project includes the drilling of clean water wells in the villages, examining the children, providing the medicine to treat the disease and educating the people on proper hygiene.

The Foundation now drills 60 new wells annually and is the largest private driller of wells in Zambia. At last check the infection rate amongst children in the region had fallen to less than 10%. Mr. Glassco continues to pursue passionately his goal to provide everyone in the Gwembe Valley District of Zambia with access to clean water.

Here in Canada, the Foundation provides funding for programs for underprivileged children in Calgary, where Mr. Glassco lives when not at his Muskoka cottage. The organization also funds 135 children annually for Dreams Take Flight, which flies children who are chronically ill and/or mentally, physically and emotionally challenged to Disneyland for a very exciting day. “We were one of the founding sponsors and have travelled to the Magic Kingdom with the children almost every year,” he smiles.

The consummate philanthropist, Mr. Glassco coyly discourages talk of the honours bestowed on him by his peers and steers the conversation back to the projects. “Very small amounts of money can make a significant difference in Zambia,” he explains as a marvelously subtle call to action. Clearly, the children in Zambia are never too far from his mind.