



MARK TUSCHMAN

**Rick Hodes**  
Long Island, NY  
<http://rickhodes.org>

## This is a soul

WHEN DR. RICK HODES went to Ethiopia in 1990 to care for Jews preparing to emigrate to Israel, he did not realize that he had finally come home, far from his birthplace on Long Island, New York.

While there, Hodes started volunteering at Mother Teresa's Mission in Addis Ababa. Twenty

years later, he is still there, saving thousands of lives of some of the most destitute people on earth. Young patients come to him with horrendous tumors, heart disease and backs severely deformed by tuberculosis of the spine or scoliosis. He is often the first doctor these kids have ever

seen. They come in sick and frightened; they leave hopeful and smiling.

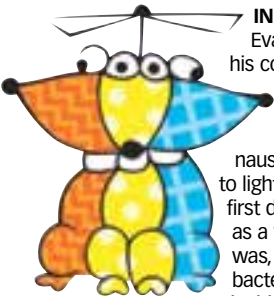
Whenever a new patient arrives, Hodes takes a photo and sends it on with the blood tests and X-rays for consultations with other physicians. "Why are you sending me a picture," a doctor will inevitably ask. "This isn't just a back," he replies. "This is a soul."

He sends his patients all over the world for surgery, wherever doctors will contribute their services, and he is often on the road to raise funds for their airfare. Every penny sent to his organization is used for the children.

Despite the long hours and the misery he encounters, Hodes is a happy man. He believes that God puts in his path those who need his help. He says it is written in the Talmud "whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world."

—Costco member Marilyn Hewitt, author of *This Is a Soul* (William Morrow, 2010).

## Knowledge is strength



**Tripod helps educate youngsters about meningitis symptoms.**

IN 1998, 20-YEAR-OLD Evan Bozof, a pitcher for his college baseball team, called home to complain of a major headache and feeling nauseated and sensitive to light. What was first diagnosed as a "little virus" was, in fact, bacterial meningitis. Evan fought for 26 days, during which time both of his arms and legs were amputated, but he could not be saved. After Evan's death, his parents learned there was a vaccine that might have prevented him from catching the disease.

"I didn't want another family to go through what we had to go through," Lynn Bozof says.

**National Meningitis Association**  
Lynn Bozof  
Atlanta, GA  
[www.nmaus.org](http://www.nmaus.org)

The Bozofs, Costco members in Atlanta, started working in their area to raise awareness. "We met other families in the same situation as we were, and we thought we would have more of an impact if we banded together," she says. "So five parents formed the [national] organization; three had lost children to meningitis and two parents were left with children who were quad amputees."

Since its founding in 2002, the National Meningitis Association has made a difference, getting its message out to millions of people through award-winning radio and television public service announcements, community and medical outreach programs, and testimonials to legislative bodies. Its website is rich with information on the disease and prevention, including a state-by-state rundown on laws and recommendations for inoculation. But it's the stories of the children who were lost or disabled by the disease that have the most impact.

"There is no 'normal' after losing a child," Bozof says. "Everything is different. And to know that it can be prevented, had you just known ..." —Steve Fisher

### SHARE YOUR STORY

If you have a note, photo or story to share about Costco or Costco members, email [connection@costco.com](mailto:connection@costco.com) with "The Member Connection" in the subject line, or send it to: The Member Connection, The Costco Connection, P.O. Box 4088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned.



Lynn Bozof (center)

STEVE MACK



Allyson Ahlstrom

AMY AHLSTROM

**Threads for Teens**  
Allyson Ahlstrom  
Santa Rosa, CA  
[www.threadsforteens.com](http://www.threadsforteens.com)

## Clothes for a cause

AT THE AGE OF 14, fashion-obsessed Allyson Ahlstrom found inspiration in the book *Generation Change*, by Zach Hunter (Zondervan,

2008). Ahlstrom, whose parents are Costco members, came up with an idea to provide free name-brand clothing for underprivileged teen girls. Within hours, in January 2010, she came up with the name Threads for Teens, designed a logo, researched clothing companies and composed a letter asking for donations.

She held her first shopping night in August 2010. Girls—primarily in foster care or from group homes—were able to pick out two head-to-toe outfits, including accessories and backpacks filled with school supplies, lip gloss and coupons for a haircut.

From the beginning the response from clothing companies was overwhelming. Luckily, Ahlstrom—now 16 and a junior in high school—was able to use a donated storage space until another supporter provided a storefront.

To date, the Santa Rosa, California, teen has helped more than 150 girls and received upward of \$65,000 in clothing and cash donations.

Explaining her decision to help by providing clothing, Ahlstrom writes on her website. "When a girl feels great about what she has on, she has more confidence and higher self-esteem."

In August of this year, Ahlstrom also organized an event where she gave out 75 backpacks filled with school supplies.

Running Threads for Teens has shown Ahlstrom that she'd rather manage her own boutique than design the fashions within. In September 2011 she got 501(c)(3) status. And while her "dream school" is Harvard, she has a bigger goal of seeing Threads for Teens in each of the 50 states.

Ahlstrom concludes, "One thing I like to say is, if everyone does a little, no one has to do a lot."

—Stephanie E. Ponder



Dr. Binay Shah examines a patient.

**The Binaytara Foundation**  
Binay and Tara Shah  
Clarkston, WA  
<http://binayfoundation.org>

COURTESY BINAYTARA FOUNDATION

## Reaching across the world

WITH AN ANNUAL BUDGET of just a few thousand dollars, the foundation that Dr. Binay Shah and his wife, Tara, run is tiny compared to other groups. But its value is priceless.

The Shahs, Costco members in Clarkston, Washington, started the Binaytara Foundation in 2007. With a small number of other doctors and supporters, the organization helps young doctors and medical students in Nepal learn effective treatment methods. As a result, thousands of patients in that impoverished nation will enjoy better healthcare.

"Ever since I was young, I wanted to help people, but I didn't have the money or the means," says Dr. Shah, who grew up in Nepal. "I always believed that with me being a physician, the best way I could help would be to contribute to health and education."

The foundation meets its goals through several efforts, all simple and low cost. One is a weekly, hour-long online telemedicine confer-

## Costco members changing the world

CHRIS A. RUSNAK

## One man's revolution

CHRIS WADDELL WAS paralyzed from the waist down in a skiing accident in 1988. He refused to give up and went on to become the most decorated male skier in Paralympic history.

Waddell, the subject of the documentary *One Revolution*, about his 2009 journey to become the first paraplegic to reach the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, then founded One Revolution Foundation. Its Nametags program encourages kids to challenge the assumptions and limitations that result from the labels that we give to ourselves and others.

"It's not what happens to you," he says. "It's what you do with what happens to you."  
—T. Foster Jones

ence, in which Dr. Shah and other volunteer physicians spend an hour with doctors in Nepal discussing the most challenging cases of the week; the American doctors offer diagnoses and make treatment recommendations.

Also, the foundation has awarded modest research grants to medical students in Nepal to give them a chance to learn the latest treatment methods. So far, eight grants have been awarded, reports Dr. Shah, an oncologist.

The biggest project to date was a trip last May to Nepal, where Dr. Shah and two other physicians made presentations on advanced treatments to about 200 students and doctors. Gradually, he says, all these efforts will improve healthcare in his native country—and save lives.

"We believe by educating a few physicians we'll eventually be helping thousands of patients," he says. "This is an effective and low-cost way to change the society and how healthcare is offered."  
—Tim Talevich



**One Revolution**  
Chris Waddell  
Park City, UT  
[www.one-revolution.org](http://www.one-revolution.org)

MIKE STONER



DOORS: NATHAN WOTKYN

DAVID J. WEST

## Opening doors of hope

**WOOD SCULPTOR**  
Daniel Pettegrew has created eight Doors of Hope to bring attention to the Erin Kimball Memorial Foundation ([www.erinkimball.org](http://www.erinkimball.org)), which helps women left homeless because of domestic violence.

Each of the doors is nearly 7 feet by 3 feet, carved from wood and stained in different colors. The collection is currently on display at various business locations around St. George, Utah, not too far from where the artist, a Costco member, lives.—SEP

**Doors of Hope**  
Daniel Pettegrew  
St. George, UT  
[www.doors-of-hope.org](http://www.doors-of-hope.org)