

BIOGRAPHY of Jared N Miller

VOCATIONAL OVERVIEW

Jared N Miller, a long time business developer, marketing consultant and philanthropist, is a former partner of The Incubator Group, a private equity firm based in his home town of Nashville, TN. Miller spent many of his younger years volunteering and lobbying for such organizations as The ONE Campaign, Save Darfur Coalition, and Keep A Child Alive. He spent four years on the ground in Kigali, Rwanda developing a template for fashion production business in Africa. He now resides in Mombasa, Kenya where KEZA headquarters is located and spends about three months per year between New York City and his home town of Nashville, TN.

Miller is the founder and President of KEZA, a couture fashion label and business development firm. KEZA provides product development and quality control systems consulting for African owned businesses and sells their products worldwide under the KEZA label. KEZA's mission is to develop fashion businesses throughout Africa that result in lucrative careers and a path to dignity for the women that own and operate them. KEZA strives to set an example of social entrepreneurialism in Africa that inspires others to invest there.

PERSONAL STORY

When I was 7 years old I saw the video for "We are the World", with Michael Jackson, Lionel Richey, Stevie Wonder and all the others, which exploited the 1984-1985 famine in Ethiopia. Seeing the starving children of Ethiopia made a profound and lifelong impression on me. There was never a moment when I saw those children as being any different than myself or my siblings. My seven year old heart was devastated that they were experiencing these atrocities. It set something off in my soul that has never subsided, thank God. There were lots of little installments along the way, many through pop culture, that inspired me to dedicate my life to Africa and fighting for the oppressed and marginalized.

I spent my childhood (on up till my 20s) fighting for every cause from The Leonard Peltier Foundation, the American Indian Movement, Martin Luther King marches and many others. I spent every summer working at Camp Buckeye in Ohio (my aunt and uncle's camp), which is focused on helping underprivileged inner city children learn about and experience God, relationships and nature. My experience at camp is what ultimately compelled me to dedicate my life to serving others. It's where I figured out who I was created to be.

In late 2001, I experienced a devastating loss in my personal life that ignited a downward spiral of drug and alcohol abuse. I lived through countless events that should have killed me, with multiple overdoses and lots of jail time. I ran from everything that required me to engage and commit. Ultimately my older brother Kevin scooped me up off the streets and whisked me off to California, where I began my road to recovery and self discovery.

While I was picking up the piece of my life, I did a lot of soul searching and trying to figure out who I was and what drove me. I wanted purpose. I needed to believe in something. I went back in my mind to figure out the times in my life when I felt "right". I quickly realized that the times when I was investing in others, fighting for others, and living a life outside of my own needs was

when things seemed to click for me. I resolved to the fact that I'd be miserable until I started living in the way I was bent; the way God created me.

I spent the next few years volunteering and lobbying for a number of non-profits such as ONE Campaign, Save Darfur, Genocide Intervention Fund and Keep a Child Alive. I had always been an entrepreneur and at the time I was a partner in a small private equity firm called The Incubator Group spending my days developing businesses. In November of 2005, I got an offer for a six month contract in Rwanda where I was to set the foundation for Project Rwanda, which is still thriving today. When I first landed there, I met a group of 23 women desperately trying to find an alternative to prostitution as a means of survival. Much like in my childhood, I instantly saw these women not as Africans, but as my sisters. That relationship remains today.

In Africa, we have a term called "ubuntu", which you can read about on my BLOG. It implies interconnectedness, loyalty, equality, respect; all of the things that should be the foundation for our society. We are not fully human alone. We were built for community, to serve each other, and to fight for the oppressed.

I believe inequality is at the root of almost every injustice of the world and the more we work to rectify that, the more we will cease to experience human atrocities like extreme poverty, oppression and war. I'll spend the rest of my life spreading the ubuntu philosophy and fighting for the underprivileged. It's the only way I feel right about life. And when I'm living in that, I am at peace, with God and humanity. I love my life and thank God I get to live it.

"Go to the people. Live among them. Learn from them. Love them. Start with what you know. Build on what they have: But of the best leaders, when their task is done, the people will remark "we have done it ourselves." – Chinese Poem

Most Sincerely,
Jared N Miller

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jared N Miller', written in a cursive style.