

The Next Generation is Ready to Serve...

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...



The Soderquist Center for Leadership and Ethics, in Arkansas (www.soderquist.org), is a cutting-edge organization dedicated to developing effective leaders. At a seminar they hosted recently, I found myself one of the few Baby Boomers in a sea of Gen X-ers and Y-ers. It became clear to me that we need a better way to assimilate these newer generations into ministry—specifically, missions work. How can we help these young people catch our vision of *Business as Mission*?

Young people in their 20s and 30s have a deep-seated mistrust of large corporations and conglomerated global ministries based on their experience with Enron-style corporate scandals and deceptive practices among Christian leaders. They are loyal only to those they can verifiably trust, and favor one-on-one experiences, rather than larger group dynamics and the bulky ministries that worked in previous generations. Technology has brought today's young adults closer together. Unlike many who have only accommodated developments like MySpace, Face Books, and text messaging, 20s and 30s have truly *assimilated* these tools into everyday life.

How can we help young people catch our vision of "Business as Mission"?

These realities, in conjunction with my experience in Arkansas, only solidify my determination to find new ways to develop fruitful relationships with younger Christians. And I think we've found a good solution.

Our goal was this: to create an internship program that will both serve our current ministry needs, and provide opportunities and incentives for the next generation to get involved with missions. Each year we will invite several college students to come and learn first-hand what we do at Integra. Currently, students have



Deloris Thomas, Integra USA board member

BOARD CLOSE-UP

Deloris Thomas

Deloris Thomas is the newest member of Integra's board of directors, and brings with her an impressive string of qualifications: An MBA from the Harvard School of Business, as well

as invaluable work experience at such American corporations as Xerox, Pepsi, Sears, and Kraft. Deloris also has experience in leadership positions at Christian organizations. She brings a passion for serving Christ with her business-related talents and skills.

She is currently president of Sterling Thomas, LLC, in Tulsa, a general management consulting firm.

When approached by current board member Mary Hutchison about joining the Integra family, Deloris began a background check of her own into the organization to see if this was where God wanted her to serve. As she learned more about the work Integra is doing in Russia and Eastern Europe, a specific thought kept dominating Deloris' thinking: *People's lives are really being changed as a direct result of this ministry.*

After thoughtful, prayer-filled consideration, Deloris decided that Integra was the place for her. When asked what attracted her to the position, she says it was, "The mission to change the economic condition of a life in a way that will last for generations to come....not just providing a one-time hand-out, but imparting real economic principles that teach people how to 'fish' for themselves. This means they can now provide for themselves and their families, without generational dependency on the government or charity."

The decision to serve with Integra was confirmed for Deloris when, at her first board meeting, representatives from Eastern Europe brought in samples of a few Integra clients' products. One specific product, hand-crafted greeting cards, stood out as being quite well made. These tangible fruits of Integra's ministry affirmed she was now part of something special.

"I am excited that God is being glorified as we tap into the unique gifts of people. The good works of Integra are making God known in real, material ways and transforming lives."

Integra is excited to have Deloris aboard and looks forward to years of fruitful, mutually beneficial partnership.

News Shorts

Romanian Shepherder Experiences Full Scope of Integra's Care

Gheorghe Galis lives with his wife and three children in a village near Oradea, Romania. He is a shepherder and wanted to increase his flock, but the banks considered him high-risk. Integra staff developed a relationship with the family, then provided a loan that allowed Gheorghe to double his flock. In time he added other animals too, as well as equipment for making cheese to be sold in the market, and is now paying off his fourth Integra loan. With the loan officer's encouragement, Gheorghe registered his business and has honestly reported his revenues. Gheorghe has come to respect the loan officer's input in other areas as well, seeking her advice when he had a dispute with a neighbor. And when Gheorghe's son was badly bitten by a sheepdog, the loan officer promised to pray for



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Romanian Woman Overcomes Divorce and Financial Devastation

Valeria (right) with her Integra loan officer, Dana

Soon after the Romanian revolution, in the early 90s, Valeria Bonca and her husband started a small business manufacturing shoes. The business prospered and they were able to provide jobs for 20 people, as well as provide for their own son and daughter.

Valeria's husband came from a Christian family and is himself a Christian, but over time he changed dramatically. In 2005, he left his family for another woman who was working in their business. He took with him all the money in their business account and many of their business assets, leaving Valeria with substantial debt and unpaid salaries. He also insisted that their home be sold so he could have his share of its value. She could find no way out of the enormous debt, and the business soon failed. Valeria was devastated. At the age of 44, she found herself the sole provider for her 9- and 12-year-old children. Yet she had her family to help her deal with these hard circumstances, and she found strength in her faith in God.

Soon after this, Valeria came to Integra and applied for a loan, which enabled her to purchase merchandise for a new

business. Starting completely from scratch, she opened a small shop selling clothing in the open-air market. The shop is doing well enough to provide for her and her two children and she is grateful to God for this. She is also very grateful for the chance Integra Romania gave her to have a new start in life. She enjoys the time spent with her loan officer, Dana, who encourages her and gives her good advice. They have developed a relationship and like to meet and talk about business and life in general.

Recently Valeria applied for a second, larger, loan, to expand her business. In addition to her table in the market, she plans to open a small grocery store in the village where she has bought a small house. The house is in a good location for such a business. She even plans to sell prepared food items as well, because there are two small factories in the neighborhood and she is sure she will have customers for her snacks.

With Integra's help, Valeria has regained her confidence and has learned to trust God to sustain her life, her children, and her business.

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him. Gheorghe appreciated the concern and care. It was a good opportunity to display God's love and show that Integra is interested not only in the business but in the life of its clients.

Two "At Risk" Orphans Head for College

With great joy, Integra Bulgaria announces that two of the young men from the "Youth at Risk" orphans' program have passed their tests and been admitted into universities. One is Mitko, who will study machine technology at a technical university. The other is Stilian, who will attend Sofia University. Both young men had been part of the orphans' program for many years. Too often, young people like Mitko and Stilian slip through the cracks and become trapped in dead-end lives. But thanks to this program, they were taken out of the orphanage and accommodated in a transition home, where they were prepared for productive lives as adults. Now, Integra Bulgaria will happily and proudly continue to help and support them.

Integra Helps Slovakian Woman Design Jewelry Business and a New Way of Life

Maria is a designer and producer of wire jewelry in a small town in southern Slovakia. Integra's "fair trade" market

access consultant helped her to design unique small boxes to pack her products in that add significant appeal and value to the products, setting them apart, and enabling her to sell at a higher price. With an Integra loan, she has been able to produce, package, and sell more of her products to shops and stores in her area. Recently, Maria participated in a large jewelry exhibition in Lucenec where she proudly displayed her jewelry for thousands of people. Because of, and in addition to her jewelry business, Maria was recently hired as a traveling sales representative for a firm in a bigger city. Though very busy, Maria is content with her life and thankful for the hand up Integra provided her. She is still in constant contact with the staff of Integra's MED program, and regularly attends activities and seminars for entrepreneurs. Last month, Maria told Iveta, an Integra representative, that her relationship with God is the most important thing in her life.

Another Packed House for Integra Russia Women's Program

Integra Russia's Micro-enterprise Development Program for Women began in January 2006. Since then they have conducted business training seminars with a total of 307 participants. The most recent Business Seminar in

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little opportunity to go overseas and participate in Business as Mission. Our program affords students the chance to discern God's will for their future ministry. It will also be a welcome shot-in-the-arm to our often over-taxed staff.

Thus far, the experience has been rewarding for all involved. Last summer, Jenna Sveen, a Wheaton College senior, spent several weeks in Bulgaria working with Integra's orphans program. Jenna is majoring in International Relations with an emphasis on Missions. She became an immediate asset to the Bulgaria team as she developed relationships with the children and helped with everyday activities and administration of the orphans program. She also helped write much-needed grant proposals and researched funding opportunities.

Jenna herself has grown in her awareness of cultural differences and how those impact the way people think and society responds. She is convinced that the programs we provide for women at risk, small business owners, and youth are critical for the people of Central and Eastern Europe.



This fall we have a new intern. **Adam Mowery**, a sophomore at Wheaton is learning our ministry from the ground up. We are involving Adam in day-to-day administrative operations, in meetings with local business leaders, in board meetings, and in building relations with our overseas



Moscow was a huge success. In what was the last training session before the summer break, nearly 40 participants packed into the hall where their instruction took place over the two-day event. Focusing on core business skills, topics included: "Characteristics of the Businessman", "Choosing and Evaluating Business Ideas", "Financial Reporting", and "Forms of Legal Registration". Integra personnel, in conjunction with various experts from the different areas of study, shared their insight and real-world experience with the group, whose ages ranged from 19 to 55.

The seminar was well received by its participants, who are "at-risk" women seeking to develop skills that will help them better provide for themselves and their families. Integra Russia is genuinely excited about the progress made. They are confident the Lord is working through this

partners. We hope to send Adam overseas this summer for additional experience. Here are some of his thoughts:

"In the past couple of years, God's plan for my life has been unclear. Am I called to go into ministry? to be a workplace missionary? or to work as a Christian camp counselor? I didn't feel God motivating me to pursue these options. Then came Integra.

"Upon meeting Bob Kuhlman, I began to grasp that Integra is an important and effective ministry, one that is making changes in Central and Eastern Europe. After starting in the Chicago office, I've only become more excited about the possibilities for kingdom

Our new internship program affords students the chance to see if God is leading them to full-time service.

program and cannot wait to see where He will lead from here. Please continue to pray that God will further bless this ministry as the staff strives to faithfully serve Him.

Integra Russia MED Seminars 2006-07

Number of seminars	10
Total number of participants	307

Of 216 participants surveyed recently:

Number who started businesses after attending a seminar	35 (16.2%)
Number planning to start businesses soon	70 (32.4%)
Number already in business at time of seminar	32 (14.8%)

Integra Russia Acquires Warehouse

On October 1, Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) transferred management of its Moscow warehousing and logistics business to Integra Russia. After 15 years of serving the church and mission community with logistics and warehousing services, MAF has decided to pursue

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business in this broken world. Changing lives, changing countries, and in the long run changing entire economic systems is one of the most awe-inspiring thoughts I've come across in a long time. The final pages on business as mission are not close to being written and that is what I find the coolest. I know there is a possibility for me one day to become involved in the growth of kingdom business in the world. While I am not on the field yet, my call is to follow God and learn everything he can teach."

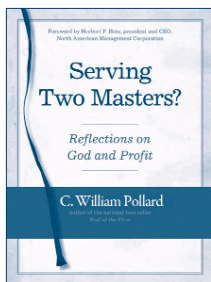
As you can see, Adam is already searching for how God will lead him. Please pray with us as we develop the funding for the internship program. The future

rests in the next generation and we want to be part of strengthening them for the task.

Resources

Serving Two Masters? Reflections on God and Profit

by C. William Pollard
\$19.95, Harper Collins,
2006, Hardcover,
288 pages



William Pollard is former Chairman and CEO of the ServiceMaster Company and a current member of Integra's Board of Reference. Under Pollard's leadership, ServiceMaster was recognized by *Fortune* magazine as the #1 service company among the Fortune 500. It was also recognized by the *Financial Times* as one of the most respected companies in the world.

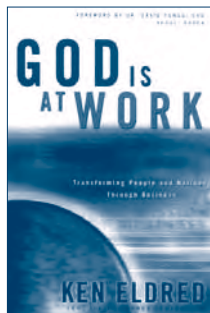
And now he'll be receiving yet another award—Integra's first-ever "Fulton Award" (named for Integra founder, Bob Fulton). Pollard is receiving this award in recognition of his dynamic, Christ-honoring leadership in the marketplace. We are truly grateful that this Fortune 200 CEO would take such an interest in Integra's ministry.

In *Serving Two Masters?* Pollard draws upon his 25-plus years of executive experience to show readers that principles of faith and smart business practices are not mutually exclusive, but can unite to strengthen corporate culture and lead to extraordinary financial success.

The book includes fifty-one brief essays on key issues such as integrity, team building, fair wages, forgiveness and mercy, work as worship, profitability, facing tough times, leading by example, and modeling community. Each essay provides practical insight and sound advice for anyone who has wrestled with integrating their faith into the world of work and profit.

God is at Work

by Ken Eldred
\$19.99, Regal Books,
2005, Hardcover,
336 pages



Successful entrepreneur (founder of overnight computer product supplier Inmac) and dedicated Christian Ken Eldred takes a hard look at how God is transforming people and nations through the emerging missions movement called "Kingdom business."

As the double-meaning title of this book suggests, it provides a comprehensive review of what God is doing in and through the workplace. Eldred's personal experience, and that of other Kingdom business leaders around the world, highlights this integrated missions movement, a unique combination of ministry, successful business practices, and

Want to Know the Latest About Integra? Check Our Website – www.integrausa.org

The newly redesigned Integra website has just about everything you would want to know about us. In addition to the basics, such as our mission and strategy, a brief history, our statement of faith, and even back issues of this newsletter, you'll find many more inspiring stories from our clients in Central and Eastern Europe. Check it out today!



economic development. Meet those engaged in exciting Kingdom business ventures today – even in areas mostly closed to the gospel.

Note: The work of Integra Ventures is highlighted several times in God is at Work, along with the many other organizations working effectively in this field.

**Islands of Integrity–
Integra Ministry
Overview DVD**
5 minutes – FREE!

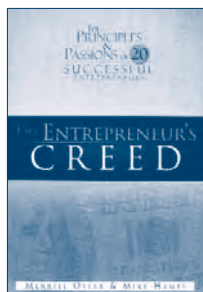


To get an up-close and personal perspective on what business as missions is all about for Integra, get your copy of this FREE five-minute DVD today. You'll meet business owners Integra has helped and hear them explain, in their own words, the vision that has been planted for ministry through successful entrepreneurship. Get your copy today and make it part of your tool kit for spreading the word about business as mission in your church.

To order call 1-800-472-1828 or email orders@integrausa.org

The Entrepreneur's Creed

by Merrill J Oster & Mike Hamill
\$19.99, Broadman and Holman, 2001, Hardcover, 225 pages



This thought-provoking review of 20 successful Christian businesses will stimulate your thinking on how to effectively integrate your faith with your work. The book is filled with encouraging stories of business owners who have sought to live out their faith in the marketplace. One chapter features the business of Integra board member and founder Bob Fulton.

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another direction that has long been a desire for their ministry. Rather than shutting down the warehouse, they have worked with Integra to continue offering these important services. Integra staff person Alexey Klinkov will take on the management of the warehouse, whose clients include Christian book distributors and US-based missions. Income generated from this business will help to bolster the finances of Integra Russia.

“Business as Mission” in the Bible

Consider these interesting facts from the Bible:

- Jesus made 132 public appearances; 122 of them were in the marketplace.
- Jesus told 52 parables; 45 were set in the workplace.
- The book of Acts records 40 divine interventions; 39 took place in the marketplace or public square.
- Jesus worked as a carpenter until age 30, then went into a preaching ministry in the workplace.
- Jesus called 12 normal working individuals, not clergy, to build His church. Some of them had questionable professions (tax collector, zealot).
- The Bible contains more references to caring for the poor than it does to heaven, hell, or the second coming.





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...changing communities

...touching lives with the Gospel.