



World Vision®

Building a better world for children

Richard Stearns

President, World Vision U.S.



Richard E. Stearns is President of the U.S. offices of World Vision, one of the largest non-profit organizations in the world. After an impressive quarter-century career in the corporate sector, he joined World Vision in 1998, guiding the Christian relief, development and advocacy organization to unprecedented growth and calling on the American church to respond to the global AIDS pandemic.

World Vision has more than 1,200 staff in the United States, and partners with U.S. corporations, government agencies, foundations, churches and more than a million individual donors to help children and their communities reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty. It is the largest member of the global World Vision Partnership, which last year touched the lives of an estimated 100 million people internationally.

Since joining World Vision, Stearns has built a strong leadership team focused on bringing corporate best practices to the non-profit sector and inspiring a culture of outcome-focused management at all levels of the organization. Donations have nearly tripled from \$358 million in 1998 to over \$1 billion in 2008, and overhead has been reduced by almost one-third.

As one of his first initiatives as World Vision's president, Stearns empowered World Vision's senior leadership to increase awareness and funding for AIDS programs. This came at a time when the organization's own research found that donors had little interest in helping to stop the spread of the disease; donors actually were less interested in helping children orphaned by AIDS than other disadvantaged children.

Stearns chronicles his journey from corporate CEO to advocate for those affected by poverty and injustice in his book, "The Hole in Our Gospel," published by Thomas Nelson in March 2009. The book challenges readers to view the gospel as more than a private transaction between God and individual Christians.

In 2009, Stearns was appointed to President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. He has served on the boards of InterAction, the U.S. Agency for International Development's Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid, the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, the Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty and the ONE Campaign. Stearns speaks frequently to audiences ranging from local churches to the World Food Program's NGO Consortium. He has received honorary doctorates from Eastern University and Azusa Pacific University.

As a spokesperson for World Vision, he has appeared on CNN, Fox, ABC, NBC, and PBS, and has written op-eds for major newspapers and magazines around the U.S. on topics such as AIDS and global poverty.

Stearns is the second of two children of working class parents in Syracuse, New York. He worked his way through Cornell University, earning a bachelor's degree in neurobiology in 1973. After receiving a master's degree in business administration from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, Stearns began a career in marketing for several Fortune 500 companies, starting with the Gillette Company.



From 1977 to 1985, Stearns held various roles with Parker Brothers Games, culminating in his appointment as President in 1984. He joined Lenox, the American gift and tableware company, in 1987 as division President. He was named President and CEO of Lenox Inc., in 1995, overseeing six manufacturing facilities, 4,000 employees and \$500 million in annual sales.

Stearns has also participated in the larger World Vision Partnership, helping to refine the organization's global business practices and global impact standards to evaluate program effectiveness. Stearns has traveled to more than 40 of the nearly 100 countries where World Vision works. He and his wife Reneé have been World Vision donors since 1984. A lawyer by training, Mrs. Stearns also travels and speaks on behalf of World Vision. The couple has five children.

Rich Stearns is based in the Seattle, WA area.

For speaker availability, please contact:

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