

EO Atlanta Donates Bicycles to the Metro Atlanta Boys & Girls Club

Remember the first time you pushed the pedal of a bike and felt it move from the effort? Wasn't it just pure exhilaration? I think that moment may have been my first glimpse into the real meaning of the words 'freedom' and 'accomplishment'. I truly felt that there were few places I couldn't go. Imagine giving the sensation of such a feeling to someone else?

The Atlanta Chapter of EO has made a commitment as an organization to take steps to give back not only to support other budding entrepreneurs, but also to the community that we live in and do business in. Most recently during our annual Inter-Forum Retreat, we decided to participate in a bicycle assembly contest. If you can envision more than 75 entrepreneurs gathered together in one room assembling bicycles that were all identical - you know that the competition was heavy to make their team's the most unique.

Many of the teams, which were made up of members from different forums, finished in record time and others worked until the buzzer sounded to add as many finishing touches as they could to their creations. There was no shortage of comedic relief during the presentations, as each team's spokesperson skillfully made their pitch as to why their team's bicycle was the best. At the end of the day there was no grand prize or plaque – just the great feeling and sense of pride in knowing that the bicycles that we had such fun assembling would find a home with a young boy or girl at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Atlanta. It is our hope that EO Atlanta will help create a cherished memory filled with the sensations of accomplishment and freedom in these young children as they take to the streets and sidewalks of Atlanta on their new bicycles.

Today, as entrepreneurs we often experience a similar sense of 'exhilaration' as we navigate the highs and lows, obstacles and challenges that we work to resolve daily. The feeling of accomplishment is a great motivator in inspiring us to seek new ways to increase and improve our businesses as well as to think of new ventures to pursue. But, while it is a tremendous feat to develop a business and nurture it to long-term growth and financial success, for many of us, there is still a need for something else. There is the desire to say that "I made a difference or that I helped someone else along the way."

EO Atlanta member Branden Lisi whose team won the bicycle assembly contest offered this reflection, "The bicycle project was an excellent exercise to reinforce a core entrepreneurial skill: creating a flexible, cohesive team which can leverage the key skills of each individual to the maximum benefit of the group. I certainly didn't go to our meeting with the idea that we would need to design, build and market a bicycle, but the experience reminded me that every day entrepreneurs are faced with unique challenges; and overcoming those challenges depends on our ability to collaborate and execute as a team rather than as a group of individuals."

This exercise reinforced for us that together we can make a difference. I challenge every member of EO to adopt a cause or charity or to make a concerted effort to give back. The personal benefits of the EO network are tremendous, but collectively we also have an opportunity to make a tremendous impact on the world. But whether you make a decision to do something independently or as a chapter – the key objective is to – DO SOMETHING!