

A Very Special Event Is Announced

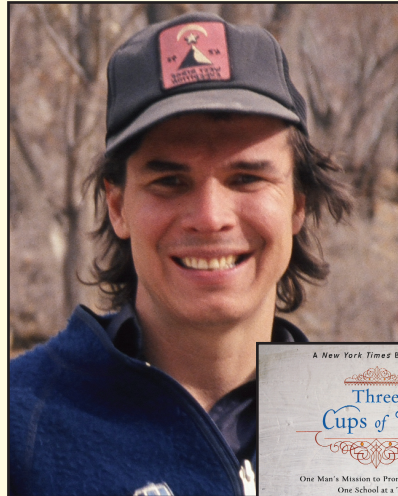
The Emerson Center, in collaboration with The Friends of the Laura (Riding) Jackson Foundation, Inc., has scheduled Mr. Greg Mortenson to speak on Tuesday, February 10, 2009 at the Emerson Center. He will present two lectures; one at 4 p.m. and the 2nd at 7 p.m. with a catered reception with Mr. Mortenson at 5:15. Greg Mortenson is the co-author of the New York Times Bestseller "Three Cups of Tea", about one man's mission to promote peace...one school at a time. Tickets are \$50 for the lecture and \$50 for the catered reception. This will be a sellout. Call 772-778-5249 to purchase your ticket.

GREG MORTENSON: "THREE CUPS OF TEA"

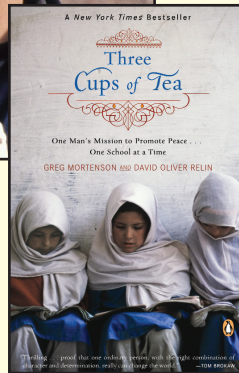
Greg Mortenson is the co-founder of the nonprofit Central Asia Institute, Pennies For Peace, and co-author of bestseller "Three Cups of Tea," which has been a #1 New York Times bestseller for 91 weeks since its January 2007 release, and selected as Time Magazine's Asia Book of The Year.

Mortenson, born in Minnesota in 1957, grew up on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, where his missionary parents worked from 1958 to 1973. He served in the U.S. Army in Germany during the Cold War (1977-79), where he received the Army Commendation Medal, and later graduated from the University of South Dakota (1983) and pursued graduate studies in neurophysiology.

After a 1993 failed attempt to climb Pakistan's K2, the world's second highest mountain in the Himalayans, he stumbled into a poor Muslim village where the villagers nursed him back to health. He promised to repay them by building the village a



Greg Mortenson



Cover of Greg Mortenson's book "Three Cups of Tea"

school. From that rash promise grew a remarkable humanitarian campaign in which Mortenson has dedicated his life to promoting education, especially for girls in remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

His work has not been without difficulty including, in 1996, an eight day armed kidnapping in the Northwest Frontier Province tribal areas of Pakistan and in 2003, he escaped a firefight with feuding Afghan warlords. He has overcome two fatwehs from enraged Islamic mullahs, endured CIA investigations, and also received hate mail and death threats from fellow Americans after 9/11, for helping Muslim children with education.

Mortenson's 78 schools provide education to over 28,000 children, including 18,000 girls, where few education opportunities existed before. On August 14th, 2008, Pakistan's government announced that Greg Mortenson will receive Pakistan's highest civil award, Sitara-e-Pakistan ("Star of Pakistan") for his courage and humanitarian efforts.

One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School At A Time

Central Asia Institute is a grassroots organization whose philosophy evolved on first-hand experiences in the field. All projects are locally initiated and involve full community cooperation. Its primary goal is to empower the local people by having them fully engaged in every aspect of a project. They use innovative techniques that encourage people to take responsibility for their own well-being and vitality. "We have found that sustainable projects can only occur if the funds, materials, and training provided are strategically combined with centuries-old, local wisdom."

The crux of Mortenson's mission revolves around books and education, represented by the schools he continues to build. According to Mortenson, the way to eradicate terrorism is to prevent people from becoming terrorists in the first place. He is convinced that the key to breaking the cycle of illiteracy and poverty in Afghanistan and Pakistan is to educate girls.

"Once you educate the boys, they tend to leave their villages and go to work in the cities. But the girls stay home, become mothers in the community, and pass on what they've learned. If you really want to change a culture, to empower women, improve basic hygiene and health care and fight high rates of infant mortality, the answer is to educate girls."



"In Pakistan and Afghanistan, people don't believe in 30-minute power lunches to do business. Rather, it takes three cups of tea over many months to cultivate a lasting relationship. When you have your first cup, you are strangers. After the second cup, you become friends, and after the third, you're regarded as family, and for family we are prepared to do anything - even die."

"The long absences from my family are painful, but when I look into the eyes of children in Afghanistan and Pakistan, I see my own children. I want my own kids and their counterparts to live in peace, but that will not happen unless we teach them alternatives to the cycle of terrorism and war."



Quotes and Images courtesy of Greg Mortenson, Central Asia Institute.