





Dr. Leanne Atwater: Jailhouse Rock

In January 2006, the first LifePilot workshop took place at Buckeye Jail, which is part of the Maricopa County Jail System in Phoenix. Two highly successful entrepreneurs, Peter H. Thomas and Al Molina, joined forces to make this workshop possible. They donated their time to visit 15 inmates from the "Alpha" drug and alcohol rehab program in an effort to deliver the values-based messages of LifePilot in a four-hour workshop at the jail's chapel.

Since then, the LifePilot Prison Series has been held regularly at both the Buckeye and Durango Jail due to the generosity of ASU and Dr. Leanne Atwater's willingness to donate her time to this cause. Atwater has become the official navigator for LifePilot, and without her this community outreach program would not exist today.



"Getting through to these inmates with our values-based approach to life, teaching them how to achieve success based on aligning their daily lives with their core values, and thereby developing a LifeManual, has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life," says Thomas. "We have taught this program to thousands of successful, and some of the wealthiest, business people across the globe and have made a positive impact on their lives; but if we have succeeded to keep even just one of these fifteen inmates from returning to jail, I will have gained 'real' significance in my life."

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Entrepreneurs are inspired by different things—for one, it may be a void in the marketplace, for others it may be developing a product that truly helps people. For Peter H. Thomas, FourSeasons developer and Century 21 real estate success story, his inspiration comes from both.

Thomas started LifePilot, a self-help and personal development program, after his son Todd committed suicide at age 36 due to mental disorders. Since that time, Thomas has been on a mission to help others around the world. For SGML, the partnership with the global entrepreneur extraordinaire couldn't have worked out better. SGML, by mission, diligently seeks to partner with global businesses, schools and individuals with the goal of extending these partnerships and business relationships to lessons and educational opportunities for its scholars and students. When the to partner with Thomas, who is based in Canada, presented itself, SGML accepted.

Goals of the agreement between SGML and LifePilot include "to honor the memory and fulfill the promise of Todd Thomas's life" as well as "provide a legacy vehicle for Peter H. Thomas and the LifePilot program to thrive, grow and evolve." Importantly, the charter includes a pledge "to teach and inspire individuals to live life consistent with their values, and to make positive choices for a happy and productive life."

This is where the story gets intriguing and personal. In searching for a way to implement the mission of LifePilot, SGML found a non-traditional partner: the Maricopa County Jail System.

Leanne Atwater, chair of the department of management in SGML, is a trained LifePilot Navigator—or instructor—who coordinates and teaches the program as a volunteer to inmates at the county jail. For two years, Atwater has presented workshops at the jail to more than 200 inmates, who voluntarily attend and use materials and programming developed by LifePilot. Atwater introduces inmates to a structured process of identifying their personal values, developing life goals that align with those values, and setting short-term objectives to help them achieve their goals.

"It truly is making a difference in the lives of many people," reports Atwater. "Simply, this program pulls people out of hopelessness and makes them recognize they are in charge of their destiny, their future. And that can be such a positive thing for many of these people who have lost all hope."

Atwater says she was drawn instantly to the program and leaves each session knowing she has made an impact on the lives of people in need and with the spirit that “today is a good day.”

Business executives, jet-set entrepreneurs and university students usually fill the registration lists for LifePilot workshops held throughout North America and internationally. Atwater’s jailhouse effort is the first of its kind for LifePilot.

After their release from jail, workshop graduates can access LifePilot’s online program with tools and step-by-step exercises to complete their life plans at their own pace. Upon completion of LifeManualOnline.com, ASU will grant them

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three continuing education credit hours. SGML also provides supplies for the jail workshops, while LifePilot provides jail-workshop graduates free access to its LifeManual online program and training for Navigators. “I always hear, ‘LifePilot got me back into the correct way of thinking,’” says Atwater. “It is reducing the suffering that many, many people have.”

Gary Waissi, dean of SGML, applauds Atwater’s volunteer efforts as an example of a valued component of a key ASU objective. “Embeddedness in the community—taking responsibility for the well-being of society—is a primary charter of ASU as a public university,” Waissi notes. “Improving the quality of life here in the West Valley and leading others to higher levels of fulfillment in their contribution to societal good—as Leanne’s commitment aspires to do—holds high priority in our responsible management of ASU’s public resources.”



→ PETER H. THOMAS

FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN
LIFEPILOT

“WHEN YOUR VALUES ARE
CLEAR, YOUR DECISIONS
ARE EASY.”



STUDENT PROFILE:
**Lauren
Wengraf**

‘08 Bachelor of Science Candidate

What makes SGML what it is today and what it will be in the future is not a complicated equation. It really is quite simple: the people.

The above observation comes from SGML student Lauren Wengraf, a junior in the Global Business program. The people, she says, turn ideas into reality. While some business schools tout their “global engagement,” this business student takes great pride in the fact ASU’s SGML does much more than talk: it delivers. For instance, Wengraf recently participated in a summer abroad class in the Czech Republic, integrating herself in the culture, the people, and the business scene. “I realized that I can’t expect the world to come to me, but rather, I have to be willing to go to the world,” says Wengraf. “There is much I have yet to learn.”

This is where SGML comes into to play. Besides offering Wengraf the opportunity to experience places like Prague and its Old World culture, students at SGML can study abroad in places such as Mexico, find internships offered by international companies with offices around the globe, and get a clear indication of what global business is all about. The reality is much different

from what is typically found in the pages of textbooks, inside lecture halls, and from Web browsing. “I know SGML will succeed in producing future global business leaders, and it is with pride that I can say that through this college and its numerous programs, I have met some of the most inspirational people of my life,” says Wengraf, a Phoenix native. “Some people ask me if I had a second chance, would I still attend SGML? I always laugh and tell them, ‘Of course!’ But, I don’t need a second chance to say that.”

Wengraf is studying for a Bachelor’s of Science degree in Global Business with a concentration in Leadership and Management. She also serves as a Peer Leader for the School. “It is my hope that with further integration into the business sector and the area of management, I will be able to choose a career that not only utilizes my management degree, but also my knowledge of global business practices,” she says. The Deer Valley High School graduate earned the Presidential Scholarship from ASU. She adds that while she knew she wanted to study business, she looked for a program stressing the importance of conducting business internationally. That’s what led her to SGML.