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- **Reader Comments**

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[Livestrong CEO Ulman on Why You Should Work for a Nonprofit](#)

February 9th, 2010 · [Events](#) · Posted by Amber Walkowiak



Doug Ulman, president and CEO of the [Lance Armstrong Foundation](#) spoke with [Dean Gilligan](#) on Feb. 4 as part of the [VIP Distinguished Speaker Series](#).

The talk took place on World Cancer Day and Ulman explained that cancer will soon become the number one cause of death around the world. He also stressed that more than 60 percent of new cancer diagnoses are taking place in developing countries, which is a change from the idea that cancer was a disease of the developed world only.

“For me as someone who was diagnosed at 19 with cancer...it’s a day to not only be proud of my own survivorship but also a day to really reflect back and think about what else can we do so that people who are diagnosed in the future have the chance as I have had to live a fruitful, healthy life post-cancer.”

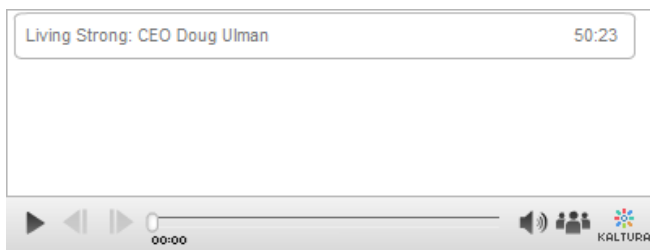
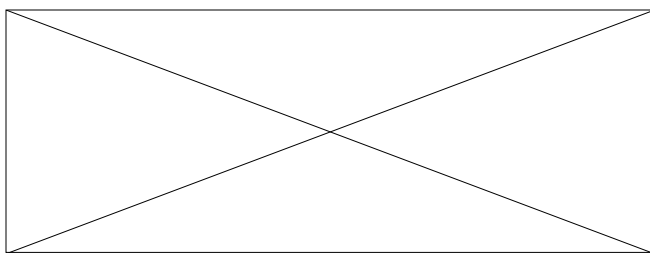
When asked how Livestrong was different than other cancer organizations, Ulman said, “I think in the nonprofit sector most organizations tend to be very conservative and they tend to look for incremental impact. So a social services organization might say ‘next year we’re going to help 20 more people.’ We actually are trying to do things that are going to change the game. I think that’s why we’ve attracted a lot of younger philanthropists to get involved, because it’s not just about writing a check. It’s not just about volunteering. It’s about really engaging in the issue and figuring out how in your daily life you can be a part of the solution.”

On a business note, Ulman said that business students should seriously consider working in the nonprofit sector as a valid career choice.

“I think traditionally the nonprofit sector has been seen as something you do later. You go out in business, and you make a lot of money and then you give back, either financially or you volunteer or you get involved as a board member. And that needs to change...We operate just like any other business. We have monthly financials. We have an audit committee. We have a board of directors. We aren’t going to distribute profit to our investors or shareholders but we operate the exact same way. In order to do that we need people who understand business.”

“You can have a career in this sector,” said Ulman. “I would also argue that you can get great experience and maybe even better experience at an earlier stage of your career in this sector. Graduating from McCombs with a business degree, you can be so beneficial and valuable to a small or medium-sized social-sector organization whereas you could end up at Dell with 1,000 people with the exact same background and you’re one of 1,000.”

For more about Livestrong and Ulman’s personal experiences, listen to the full interview.



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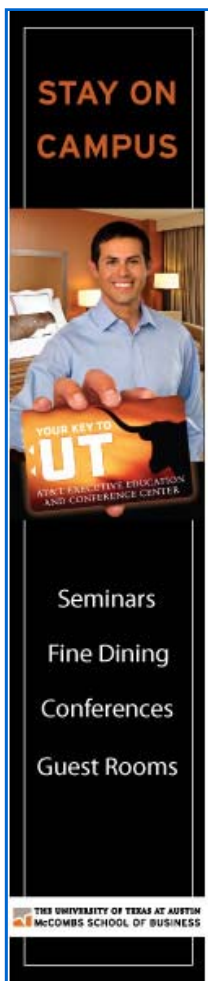
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