



**AN  
ADVENTURE  
THAT WAS  
MEANT  
TO BE**

THE JOURNEY *of* BRUCE NEUROHR *and* M2B MINISTRIES

It was a crisp December day in Atlanta, Georgia and Bruce Neurohr was excited to have his family home for the holidays. Just as they all settled around the table for Christmas dinner, his youngest daughter, Taryn, made an announcement that took everyone by surprise. "I want to go on the World Race," she declared. "What's the World Race?" they asked. When Taryn explained that the World Race was a mission trip for young adults to serve in 11 countries in 11 months, her parents had a typical response—her mom, Cinda, said, "That sounds dangerous." While Bruce replied, "That sounds expensive." Little did they know that Taryn had just brought them the best Christmas gift they could have ever imagined...**an adventure that was meant to be.**

Over the next year, Bruce witnessed the Lord work in his family as Taryn's commitment to the mission field stretched their faith in new ways. Despite Bruce and Cinda's initial doubts, Taryn, a senior in college, put all her efforts into raising the support she needed for the trip. Bruce explains, "At \$15,500, I thought there was no way that she was going on this trip. We knew that it would have to be God providing for this. But she was the first one on her 50-member squad to be fully funded. That built my faith."



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## *from Parent to Coach*

During the year leading up to Taryn's departure on the race, God was also preparing Bruce for his own adventure on the mission field. Through a mutual friend, Bruce had the opportunity to meet Seth Barnes, director of Adventures in Missions and head of the World Race. They instantly made a connection and as Bruce got to know the other racers on Taryn's squad, he was drawn to volunteering for a larger role in the organization.

That opportunity came after Taryn completed her race in 2012 and Bruce and Cinda were asked to join the World Race as coaches in 2013. So they headed out for around the world to join "O Squad" for five separate weeks in El Salvador, Guatemala, Bulgaria, Uganda, and finally the Philippines.

Every day was life-changing experience. But one of the most memorable highlights happened during the final month of debriefing in Uganda when one of the racers asked Bruce and Cinda to baptize her. As they waded into the muddy waters of the Nile River together, they both knew it was a moment they would never forget.



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## *from Coach to After-Care*

It was during the end of his time as a coach that Bruce had a troubling realization. He says, "When we got to the final debrief in the Philippines, that's when I thought, who is going to care for these kids when they come home? Who is going to provide jobs? Who is going to connect them to what they are really passionate about?"

Bruce and Cinda had seen what had happened with Taryn when she came back from the race. She had faced a significant struggle with the loss of the community, and the aftermath of adjusting to America after serving in difficult circumstances around the world. "My squad had become like 40 new sons and daughters to me and I knew they would need help just like Taryn did," says Bruce. "I knew I had to do something."



*World Racers pray for Bruce as he launches M2B.*

## *from Missions to Business*

Bruce felt God urging him to leave his job at the National Christian Foundation to start a ministry focused on providing support for returning World Racers. He didn't know exactly what that would look like but he had owned a successful staffing business for a large part of his career. So he launched an effort to take returning racers from "missions to business" through paid apprenticeships at various companies. Bruce explains, "The kids didn't know what they wanted to do so I thought, we'll get them meaningful work through apprenticeships and they can try out different types of jobs."

He approached Christian business owners and they were very receptive. When Bruce described the skills of the racers such as their strong work ethic, ability to resolve conflict, their love for people, and their posture as servant leaders, employers loved the idea of hiring them.

But then Bruce encountered a problem that no one had anticipated. "We built the website, and we had employers lined up but no young people came," says Bruce. "It was baffling. That's when a friend of mine said that I needed to look at this more deeply. He urged me to find out what was going on because he thought that this effort was too good of a program to fail."

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So his friend lined him up with a psychologist from Georgia State University who had worked with young people in cross-cultural settings. He told Bruce that he knew exactly what the problem was. The racers were suffering from a form of post-traumatic stress. "All of the sudden I realized the reason they weren't coming," says Bruce. "They were so emotionally in the tank. They weren't recognized or supported by their church and their tight community was no longer there. That's when I knew we'd gotten ahead of ourselves."

Now M2B is focused on providing aftercare, counseling, mentorship, and a solid transition plan to returning racers. One of the most important aspects is pairing the racers with a mentor who is a World Race alumni. "Soldiers returning from the battle field are often partnered with a veteran when they come home."

"It's so important for these young people to have someone who's been there and knows what they're going through. So our mentorship program is a very important part of what we do," says Bruce.

***Who is going to take the fruit produced over 11 months and leverage it for Kingdom impact for the rest of this young person's life?***

## **Cultivating fruit that was meant to be**

Bruce has a vision to see every returning missionary discover who they were meant to be in God's Kingdom after their time in the field. "My greatest fear is that millions of dollars are given for young people to go on the World Race, and God has given this wealth of experience to thousands of young people, and they come back and the fruit that God had brought into their lives ends up rotting on the ground," he says. "Who is going to take the fruit produced over 11 months and leverage it for Kingdom impact for the rest of this young person's life? What an opportunity. We're going to provide the vehicle to do just that."

