



Giving Back Backstory

Every once in a while, an individual comes along with a vision - an idea born that challenges established practices. At first, the idea may be ridiculed; even fiercely resisted but eventually it is accepted by the mainstream. The man with this idea is someone perhaps you wouldn't expect.

You may know him as a former World No. 1 professional American tennis player. A winner of eight Grand Slam singles tournaments. An Olympic Gold Medalist in singles tennis. One of five male players winning all four Grand Slam singles events during his career. The only player in the open era to win every Grand Slam singles title. These are but a few of his athletic accomplishments, as you'll soon see there are more - yet of a different kind.

His name - Andre Agassi - Founder of The Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, which has raised over \$60 million for at-risk children in Southern Nevada. His idea - the Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy (AACPA) in West Las Vegas, NV a K-12 public charter school for at-risk children - it's changing the face of how we educate our children.

Founded by Andre, and funded by a 40 million dollar contribution from The Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, Agassi Prep opened in 2001 with 150 students in grades three through five. A growing student body has expanded Agassi Prep into a K-12 eight-acre campus. In 2005 Agassi Prep was the only middle school in Clark County, NV to receive an "Exemplary" designation from the Nevada Department of Education. In addition, was named a National Model Charter School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Tuition is free - the majority of students are African American selected by lottery and there's a waiting list. The Agassi Prep mission? "Providing educational and recreational opportunities to enhance the character, self-esteem and career possibilities of at-risk boys and girls." Agassi Prep gives children who don't fall into traditional "teaching guidelines" an education and the tools to develop into well-rounded adults who in turn contribute to the community.

Beyond a conventional academic curriculum, Agassi Prep inspires students to develop intangible traits such as character, respect, motivation and self-discipline, which until recently due to emphasis on analytical skills have been undervalued. Students must memorize The Academy's Code of Conduct posted inside the front door, which states, "The essence of good discipline is respect. Respect for authority and respect for others; respect for self and respect for rules. It is an attitude that begins at home, is reinforced in school and is applied throughout life."

Agassi Prep holds students, parents and teachers to a higher standard and individual accountability. Each one must sign a "Commitment to Excellence." Consequences for not upholding the Academy principles can lead to loss of certain privileges and relative to its teachers, dismissal from AACPA.

Humanity is ripe for the hallmark of a true teaching academy like Agassi Prep. Its creative methodology inspires students to a higher level of development without personal agenda. But what inspires Andre to continue this monumental mission? For Andre it's a selfless undertaking. It's a labor of love and devotion. Helping children realize their full potential and to stand on their own - is the highest reward.

Pass It On.

VALUES.COM THE FOUNDATION
FOR A BETTER LIFE®

www.values.com