UF GRAD, JARED PAUL (BABA ’00) DECIDES TO GRAB MEANING OVER MONEY

Jared Paul quit a well-paying corporate job to help as many people as possible.

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There is simply more to life. More than graduating from the University of Florida with a bachelor's in business administration. More than pursuing a life of drab office work.

That was Jared Paul's take.

Paul, UF grad Class of 2000, left Gainesville after graduation and, with a girl in mind, took a job in San Francisco.

Things did not go as planned.

"Coming out of a breakup, I began questioning what I was doing," Paul recalled. "I felt I was living by societal norms."

"I started getting in touch with my spiritual side," Paul continued. "I quit a well-paying corporate job to help people having similar transitions."

Thus, Paul says he was inspired in June 2008 to form A Good Idea, a nonprofit organization in San Francisco.

"The goal of AGI is to help as many people in need as possible," Paul said. "I want the group to serve as a vehicle for people's positive social change ideas, and to help bring those ideas to life."

Paul's first "good idea," a lofty mission, is to ease homelessness in San Francisco by bringing a high school and village for homeless youth to the city.

AGI hosts a monthly "Call to Arms," an event to help people on the street by handing out food and toiletries followed by a social gathering.

"We like to make this a less scary way to get involved," Paul said. "Empathy and compassion is created in people when they have a chance to help others."

The group sponsors "Intentional Acts of Kindness," gatherings in bustling squares around San Francisco where people get together for random acts of kindness: paying for people's groceries, giving hugs and smiles.
The biggest event held by the group so far was "A Good Day," a party celebrating the homeless and their efforts to get integrated into the community. "A Good Day" attracted 100 volunteers helping out 75 guests, Paul said.

"We expect those numbers to double" in the next such event, Paul said. "We want (the homeless) to feel cared for," Paul said.