

Doc Hendley

Founder & International President of Wine To Water, Top 10 CNN Hero

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Topics

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- Environmental Issues / Climate Change
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About Doc Hendley

Doc Hendley is proof that anyone, even a tattooed keg-tapper, can cure what ails the world.

In 2003, Doc Hendley dreamed up the concept of Wine to Water while bartending and playing music in nightclubs around Raleigh, North Carolina. In January of 2004 he held his first fundraiser and by August was living in Darfur, Sudan installing water systems for victims of the government-supported genocide.

When Doc returned home in 2005, the haunting memories of what he had seen in Darfur drove him to continue growing the organization he had started only two years earlier. And in 2007, after working two jobs and volunteering his time for over three years, Wine To Water became an official 501 (c)(3) and Doc's dream finally became a reality.

Hendley's work aims to help the 1.1 billion people worldwide who lack access to clean water, a figure estimated by the World Health Organization. Nearly two-thirds of that group lives in Asia. In sub-Saharan Africa, 42 percent of the population lives without yard taps, household connections or other improvements to sanitize water. Unclean water is the number one killer of children in the world. Water borne illnesses kill far more children the HIV/AIDS and Malaria combined. Every 15 seconds a child dies from unclean water.

Doc Hendley was named one of the Top 10 CNN Heroes for 2009 (chosen by a panel of judges including Gen. Colin Powell, Whoopi Goldberg, Ted Turner and Sir Elton John).

His book, "Wine to Water: A Bartender's Quest to Bring Clean Water to the World" (Avery/Penguin, Jan 2012), is a captivating story of an ordinary bartender who's changing the world through clean water.

Select Keynotes

- **Hell or High Water: How One Man Turned Wine into Water and Transformed Customers into Crusaders**

Doc Hendley was once a small-town bartender with a dream of changing the world through clean water. Through a series of simple wine-tasting events to raise funds for clean-water projects that he launched in North Carolina, he has created an international fundraising organization that provides clean water and sanitation to people in need around the world. In this speech, Hendley shares insights on how others can put simple ideas into action and use it to solve problems on the local, national, and international level.

- **Digging for Hope: Turning Wine to Water & Other Modern Day Miracles**

In this inspirational keynote, Wine To Water founder Doc Hendley teaches audiences a simple but profound principle for improving the world: do what they can with what they have. As the founder of an international fundraising organization that had humble origins, Hendley illustrates the immense power of relationships to transcend perceived barriers, proving the power of one to transform the impossible into the inevitable.

Select Book Titles

- **2012:** Wine to Water: A Bartender's Quest To Bring Clean Water to the World

Select Articles



- [AC360 with Anderson Cooper](#)

"CNN HEROES: SAVING HAITI"

- [Doc on PBS](#)

Interview on PBS

- [Doc on FOX](#)

Interview on FOX

- [Doc on NBC](#)

Interview on NBC

Select Testimonials

"Doc is a wonderful, sincere person who has made a tremendous difference in the world. He sees himself as average, yet he has saved thousands of lives by raising awareness of the world's plight of lack of clean drinking water. His powerful, moving story about how each of us has the power to make a difference in the world is one that will shake you to your foundation. Our audience of 300 school administrators was touched and inspired by this remarkable man. We were truly in the presence of greatness, wrapped in humility and compassion. Thank you, Doc. ... I would like to add something to my previous review. I booked Doc, Christine Cashen, Laura Caldwell, and the Corps Group all from www.seeagency.com for ONE EVENT. See Agency was like a one-stop shop for my speaker needs. I collaborated with See Agency to create a themed event where each speaker emphasized a different facet of leadership for our school administrators. This brought added value for our participants. Working with See Agency's speakers (and leadership team) saved me time and energy when creating a powerful, meaningful conference."

— Adam Palmese, Orange County Public Schools

"Our recent Transportation Conference was chock-full of technical sessions and we wanted something motivating, inspiring...more personal... for the keynote address. Doc was the perfect solution to mix things up for the attendees and once I contacted the See Agency, everything went seamlessly. As the event planner for this organization, I have never seen a room full of engineers give a standing ovation for a speaker...and Doc brought this crowd to their feet. Attendees stood in line just to shake Doc's hand and say thank you – thank you for inspiring me, thank you for telling us your story, thank you for reminding us we all can make a difference. Event planners take note: if you choose to book Doc for your event, you absolutely will impress every attendee, every Board member, every guest, every client – and YOU will know you made a difference by making that choice. What an honor it is to have helped spread Doc's message!"

— American Council of Engineering Companies of North Carolina

"So where do I start, first of all let me say it's a little daunting to write a review for Doc Hendley! "A bit above my paygrade" to judge such a person. I can tell you I've seen many many speakers over the years and Doc is one of my favorites; not only for what he has done but because he is so humble and truly just a regular guy. You could have heard a pin drop in a room full of people when Doc told us the story of his journey to found the organization Wine to Water. He somehow can make everyone in the room believe they are capable of anything. A true motivator and inspiration."

— Amy Young, Grand Connection

"Thanks again for participating in the Spectrum Health event last week. We have been hearing nothing but great comments about your presentation. Several people have approached me and said that it was the best keynote we have ever had for this event! Thanks again for such a powerful, motivational presentation!"

— Amy, Spectrum Health

"It was amazing. HE was amazing! It was an inspiring, moving, powerful, and humbling experience. Thank you for helping to make it possible for our small little college to share in the experience of spreading Doc's story and message. The ripple effect his college visits create can become a powerful force in making the world a better place!" With sincere gratitude,

— Ann-Lis, Hartwick College

"Thank you for making today's presentation possible! Our event was amazing and we have already begun to get wonderful feedback. I know Doc was able to inspire many people this morning. A BIG thank you to all involved in planning this program for the Young Professionals Network of the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce. The next event has big shoes to fill! Again, thank you!"

— *Blair R., WakeMed Foundation.*

"Doc was amazing! It was the most well attended event in the seven year history."

— *Blair R., Young Professionals Network*

"Doc was not only charming and modest, he is one of the most inspiring speakers I have ever heard. He takes you on an emotional journey to communities whose living conditions are unimaginable to most of us, and his ability to share his vision, his passion, his commitment and his excitement for his global mission has ignited a flame of passion in our membership as well. We have had the pleasure of Doc's company at all of our events since that one last winter, and we have united behind him and his efforts to make a difference in the world. We are better people as the result of knowing Doc... We think Doc is indeed a "HERO!"

— *Carol Owen, SITE SOUTHEAST*

"Doc Hendley is the epitome of the individual who has made a difference. He never planned to do this but when he saw a need, he saw that he had a talent to actually direct efforts at improving that need. As a result literally tens of thousands of people around the world now have clean drinking water they did not have before Doc Hendley came along. I am honored quite frankly to have Doc Hendley graduate as a graduate of NC State."

— *Dr. Jim Woodward, Chancellor NC State University*

"Wow wow wow! Doc was beyond phenomenal. Thank you doesn't begin to cover it."

— *Eileen, HFMA*

"Doc was a hit with our audience. Yes, yes, he got a standing ovation and damn if he didn't make me tear up a couple of times. He was just very authentic and compelling on stage, and very easy to work with offstage." We put out feedback slips at our breakfast meetings with ratings of Great/Good/Average/Poor. We got 15 "Great"s. Here are some of the comments: "Terrific – heart, soul, great cause, inspiring" "Best yet!" "Very inspirational. Amazing what one person can do." "Awesome!!" "Wonderful inspiring message." "Absolutely great today." "Wow! What an inspirational speaker. I was truly moved. Thank you for bringing Doc to WIN!" "Amazing, compelling." "Doc Hendley absolutely amazing amazing. Thank you for providing an incredible learning experience."

— *James C., Executive Director, WIN*

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"Doc delivers a very inspiring story of how one person can make a difference. His story covers many continents and tragedies with a central and simple theme of providing safe water. In today's complex world, he takes you back to the basics and points out that sometimes the simplest solutions provide the best outcome. His story is transferable to many aspects of life where mission, passion and service intersect. While his story creates impact at the highest level, you leave inspired to make a difference as well."

— *Julie Jones, Board of Directors Association for Healthcare Foodservice*

"His story is amazing and inspirational, yet a tad frightening at the beginning (Darfur!). His use of imagery really brings his spoken story to life for his audience. What a humble and genuine man – for someone who has experienced and accomplished so much in the humanitarian field,

his modesty is remarkable. In a room of hundreds of corporate executives and government and NGO officials, he easily captivated attention because his commitment to the cause is real, his passion is clear, and his speaker presence is engaging. It was a pleasure to get to talk to him more during the event reception, where Wine to Water wine was served."

— K Taylor, BCLC

"Doc Hendley is an incredibly passionate speaker. He spoke at Watauga High School in Boone, North Carolina on April 20th about his story and his organization, Wine to Water. Doc reached each person on a personal level with his shocking statistics about the water crisis coupled with his very real photos. This is something that most people know little about, but he did a great job of demonstrating its devastating effects on over 1 billion people worldwide. He was very relatable and down-to-earth, an average guy encouraging the youth to pursue their dreams. Doc, as always, was adamant that the youth should feel empowered and capable of doing anything – something that he didn't always feel in school. He was very encouraging to the students, urging them to take action and fight against the water crisis alongside him. I've heard Doc speak a few times before, but never had I seen him so confident, excited, and ready to inspire so many students. He kept the attention of each and every student throughout his entire speech, answered a lot of questions about himself and Wine to Water, and, in the end, received a standing ovation from the audience. Doc has an amazing story and Wine to Water is a great organization that's helping save lives. He was successful in spreading awareness about the water crisis to the youth in our area and helping them to realize that they can make a difference. Doc is compassionate, dedicated, humble, and inspirational – I wholeheartedly recommend him as a speaker."

— Katy Cook, Appalachian State University

"What an honor it was to hear Doc speak at PSAV's management conference. A truly inspirational story which puts everything into perspective. My perception (rightly or wrongly) of most charitable organizations these days is that money is spent on the overhead of the operation and on short term fixes (e.g. bottled water) without putting due consideration into the long term solution. Your approach of starting with "hearts and minds" prior to offering long term solutions is one more agencies should model themselves on. Thank you for sharing your story and touching our hearts and minds."

— Matt Harvey, PSAV Presentation Services

"It was an amazing event with Doc Hendley! The event went beautifully. We had about 40 students at dinner and 450 people at the talk, about 200 of which waited in line to have their books signed. All in all, Doc was really genuine and connected wonderfully with the students. I don't think it could have gone better! Truly a pleasure working with all of you!"

— Megan, Rockhurst University

"Our conference on May 8th went very well and Doc Hendley was the perfect closing speaker for the day. Most of our guests (myself included) remarked that he was the most inspiring speaker they had ever seen. And further, Doc stayed for our cocktail reception and interacted with our group. A truly incredible individual, we could not be happier with the results of Doc Hendley's program and visit to our national conference."

— Nicole B., Sysco

Oh, my where do I begin. It was a fabulous day for the college. The President of the College is over the moon about the common read and everything Doc did with the students. This is going to be so difficult to follow with another book. He is truly a giving human being and he touched so many lives during his one day on campus. I cannot thank Doc and you enough for this shining moment for our college. It is frightening to me how we select our next common read.

— North Iowa Community College

"Thank you for a dynamic and inspiring talk, Doc, and especially for your work bringing clean water to people who desperately need it. It's great to see America so well represented in the world."

— Patrick Kilbride, US Chamber of Commerce

"There is one thing that rings true every time I get the pleasure of hearing Doc Hendley speak—his passion comes through and hits you like nothing you've ever experienced in your lifetime. It's not just the way he interacts with the audience, a sort of down home person that you seem

to already know even though you don't, but it's the message about improving who we are as people each and every day, and helping those who have difficulty helping themselves because of places they live in or the circumstances of their country. Doc brings that message of hope and seems to naturally lift every person out of their comfort chair and into the wilds of Africa or the devastation in Haiti right alongside him. You feel everything that he feels and see everything that he saw. We are just enamored to be part of his world in a small way and hoping to work with him to better our world in a meaningful way."

— *Rich Henning, United Water, North American Managers Conference*

"Doc is a fantastic person in every way. His humility and dedication to making the world a better place is contagious for children and adults. His colorful and human stories of Africa and his work kept these youngsters captivated. I enthusiastically recommend him."

— *Scott Brogan, Conversations with Brilliance*

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— *Sysco*

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— *The Association for Healthcare Foodservice*

Doc's message was powerful, impactful, and inspiring. He was a perfect example for our students of how even an everyday individual can make a difference in the world around them. His authentic and heart-felt story was one that will stay with our students for years to come and his engaging and thoughtful keynote both challenged and inspired our students to think critically about their leadership. We were simultaneously moved, entertained, and inspired. Doc has a real gift, and I am so grateful he was able to share it with our campus.

— *The University of Tennessee, Knoxville*