

# Teaching ROOTS RUN DEEP

BY / BECCA BROADDUS

**B**ruce Ballengee is first and foremost a teacher. He just doesn't have a classroom.

No, he is not a teacher at an educational institution. Ballengee even claims he's not using his BBA in Economics and Finance from Baylor Business or his MBA from the University of Chicago. But after a few minutes talking to him, it is apparent the man is a teacher—focused on spreading knowledge and helping people reach their full potential.

Although Ballengee claims he hasn't used his degrees much, he has an undeniably successful résumé featuring various leadership positions at Booz Allen Hamilton, Accenture, Sprint and Hitachi Consulting. But after years in the business world, he became disillusioned with how most businesses operate—valuing the bottom line more than employee well being. He considered leaving it behind to earn his PhD and start teaching.

"I told myself, 'Bruce, you love teaching. You love working with younger people. Always have. Always will. Just go have pure fun, enjoyment and be contributing back to society,'" Ballengee said.

But he was convinced to stay in consulting and start a new kind of consulting company, where educating and developing people is the mission. In 2003, he co-founded Pariveda, a consulting firm that, in his

words, "help[s] businesses solve ambiguous problems, usually by employing technology." He uses his company as a platform for fostering the personal and professional growth of his more than 500 employees scattered across Pariveda's nine locations.

"Companies are generally set up for profit," Ballengee said. "Good things happen at these companies, but they're in a business model that does not care. They work around their business model through sheer human will. Businesses aren't built around the idea that the scarce resource is fully developed employees. We [at Pariveda] come at it the other way. We're a human business. Our shareholders are our employees. If you want to create as many capable people as possible... you have to measure people on their ability and potential ability, and you have to value and pay them accordingly."

Ballengee asked the question, "What happens when good companies hire good people, and good people believe in doing good things?" To the confusion of at least two consulting firms hired by Pariveda since opening, it's working. To date, employees have logged more than 900,000 community service hours, and the company is at more than \$100 million in revenue.

*"We're just doing good,"* Ballengee said. "Doing good is incredibly lucrative."

His classroom extends outside of Pariveda too. He is active with Baylor Business in several capacities, including as a member of the Hankamer School of Business Advisory Board, the Baylor Angel Network and the New Venture Competition Advisory Board.

Ballengee is also a teacher of nature and conservation. As the son of an entomologist and a land man in the oil industry, he learned to appreciate nature early. Now, he is the stewardship board chairman of the Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center, a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas, a member of the Native Prairie Association of Texas and certified as master naturalist in the North Texas chapter.

**BRUCE BALLENGEE**  
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*Location courtesy of Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center at Cedar Hill in Cedar Hill, Texas.*

"My mom, more so than my dad, had a great love of nature," Ballengee said. "[My dad] read extensively in science, and he would often pass along his books. We would discuss things with my mom, and she would have us out in the yard and explain things to us. She got me into bird watching. I started out like that."

Now, he's working to stimulate urban conservation in Texas, and the central U.S. (a major migratory bird corridor), through work with the government and nonprofits. He started at home with his own neighborhood, and hopes to extend his efforts to Dallas and beyond.

Ballengee is actively working on a legacy that'll leave the Earth, Pariveda and his family continuously successful and well preserved. Want to learn more about it? Just ask him. He might teach you a thing or two. 🌱