

Daniel Grant's father grew up in a low-income area of a small Alabama town. **His zip code dictated the type of education he received.** Luckily, he was athletic.

He received a sports scholarship to a small state university in Alabama, and ultimately, was able to break the cycle of poverty and start his own sales company. Because of that, Daniel grew up in a different zip code and had a fundamentally different education.

"I have a heart for missions and international poverty," Grant, a Baylor Business alumnus, said. "I thought that was the direction I would take my career after college, but when I learned about my dad's story, **I didn't want to work internationally when there were so many problems in my backyard. Our education system needs improvement, and I believed my business background could help me have an impact there.**"

Before working for Teach For America (TFA), Grant worked at Buckner International for a summer, then moved to Boulder, Colo., to help start a college ministry at a local church. After one year, he moved back to Waco and worked as a telecounseling coordinator, then an admissions counselor at Baylor.

As an admissions counselor, he recruited students at private high schools in Texas and throughout the U.S. to attend Baylor.

"As I was recruiting, it was easier for me to recruit students at private or high-income high schools than it was for my coworkers to recruit at public, low-income schools," he said. "Students from high-income schools were more prepared for our admissions process because of the high quality of their education and the many college readiness supports in those schools. It was more difficult for students from low-income high schools to meet our admissions criteria, simply because of the opportunity gap. I started to discover the truth about poverty and educational inequity in America, and I wanted to put my business degree to work against it."

So Grant began to research the topic. Soon his studies led him to Teach For America, a national organization whose business model was designed to help lead an educational revolution in low-income communities across the country. The organization recruits leaders with a record of achievement, who work to expand educational opportunity, asking them to commit to an initial two years of teaching in a low-income community.

As it turns out, TFA was hiring a recruitment associate role to recruit teachers from faith-based universities, institutions and organizations.

"It's ridiculous how ordained it was," Grant said. "I was an unconventional hire. My job was to recruit at faith-based schools like Baylor and manage a robust national recruitment campaign."

He moved up the ranks to managing small partnerships, then most recently, to public affairs. He maintains working with groups of faith for recruitment and broader community engagement.

"I manage a team that leads various strategic initiatives, but I manage the faith-based initiative myself," he said. "I'm trying

to work with national and local faith leaders. My vision is for churches and local places of worship to play a role in helping our students get the opportunities they deserve."

It's working. Of the top 12 national organizations that bring the most teachers to TFA's nearly 11,000 current first or second year teachers, half of the organizations are faith-based organizations.

"It's important for me to work somewhere where I can have an impact on the Kingdom, while also putting my business degree to work and seeing the results of a business-minded organization," he said.

After working for Teach For America for a while, Grant still wanted to make an impact internationally. As it happened, at a conference, he met Thomas Keown, who founded One Home Many Hopes, now known as Many Hopes. Many Hopes is a long-term strategic solution to the corruption and poverty that exploits the most vulnerable girls and boys in Eastern Kenya. The organization has built a girls' home, a school and is now building a boys' home in rural Eastern Kenya.

"I had not found a way to get involved internationally in what God was doing," Grant said. "I went to Kenya with [Keown] and met these amazing girls who had been abandoned by their families and community, but who had unbridled potential. I immediately decided these were the girls and this was the community I wanted to support."

At the time, Grant was working at TFA in New York City, and he started the New York chapter of Many Hopes. Since moving to Austin and starting his family, he is moving to a more advisory position leading the national board.

"I want to ensure my impact is not just global and national but also local. I joined a local school community board because my son will grow up in this Austin school district," he said. "The older I get, the more personal and professional responsibilities compete for my time and energy. I find it's even more critical to prioritize and decide where I want to spend my time, money and energy. I am committed to continuing to accelerate Teach For America and our national impact, Many Hopes and our global impact, while also stewarding the impact of my family locally."

"I have a
heart for missions
and international poverty."

daniel **BBA '03**
GRANT

Vice President of Strategic
Initiatives and Partnerships
Teach for America

AUSTIN, TEXAS

bbr.baylor.edu/daniel-grant