

## Earning As in life

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Most students know that to excel in school you need to get good grades- even straight A's- but what do you do to excel in life?

Also get straight As.

Based on a program developed by Jack and Lexie Rolfe of St. George, the School of Life Foundation teaches people from all backgrounds how to succeed by paying attention to 10 basic principles, each represented by a word beginning with "A." When you finish the homework associated with each principle, you have achieved straight As- Appreciate, Assist, Attitude, Aim, Associate, Align, Action, Avoid, Adapt and Always- in life.

"It's adaptable from the weakest to the strongest," Jack Rolfe said of the program's curriculum.

But one of the unique aspects to this self-improvement program is it's not for sale, the book and the training are all made available to organizations and individuals for free, thanks to donations given to support the Foundation.

"We really want to help kids," said Jeff Tuscano, director of donor participation and program development for School of Life Foundation.

"It's so rewarding," added Jack.

Although the program has been in the works in Jack's and Lexie's minds and lives for the past 14 years, it's only in the last year that they've been able to operate with 501(c)3 status and the program officially launched in August. Already, they've had local, national and international interest.

After posting a 60-second promotional video from their Web page on YouTube, a school in the Philippines contacted School of Life Foundation and asked to start using the Straight As in Life program, Jack said.

Locally, organizations like Millcreek High School, the Youth Crisis Center and Snow Canyon High School student government, among others, have joined the fray and Jack and Tuscano expect to hear from even more.

"There would be an inexhaustible supply of places to put this because there will always be youth who need to learn life skills," Tuscano said.

One of the reasons people latch on to the School of Life program, Jack said, is because it's organized for them into a comprehensive but simple written curriculum that can be adapted to fit a variety of needs.

The program is based on a workbook titled "Learn to School Your Toughest Opponent" that takes the individual through each of the 10 A's, explaining the need for life skills like gratitude, goal setting and flexibility, then follows the explanation with exercises or "homework" to help people implement the skills into their lives. The A's can be tackled in any order, depending on individual needs.

The program is intended to be used with a mentor so there is accountability for those working toward achieving straight A's.

"It doesn't work if it's just on their own," Tuscano said.

Lynn Madsen, teacher at the Focus Center at Millcreek High School, is using the program with his students and so far, he's pleased with the results.

"Most students love it," Madsen said. It helps them become all-around more responsible citizens... if they choose to practice it.

In other words, you have to take Action- one of the principles in the book and Denise DeGasser's favorite "A."

"In order to accomplish anything you have to do something," DeGasser said. "Action is one of the best things."

DeGasser was introduced to the School of Life Foundation when her daughter was assigned to read it in school. After spending time on each of the principles, DeGasser said her daughter is more goal-oriented and has a more positive outlook on life.

"It's really given her more of an understanding of how (helping people) affects everybody around her and the chain reaction you get when you do one nice thing for someone," DeGasser said.

"I encourage everybody to read this book," she said.

Because School of Life Foundation operates as a non-profit organization, Jack and Tuscano said donations are necessary to put the book into people's hands at no cost to them. To encourage donations and to spread the word about the program School of Life Foundation is putting on two events in March- an ATV giveaway sponsored by Stephen Wade Power Sports where every \$10 donation to the foundation earns one entry to win an ATV. The second is a basketball event called March Mayhem in the Desert taking place on Saturday, March 22. It will feature a team from the Youth Crisis Center competing against an all-star team made up of seniors from the five area high schools and the St. George City Fire Department playing against "men from the hood"- from the Impact of Southern Utah organization. The ATV drawing will take place at the March Mayhem event.

Donations can be made by going online at [www.schooloflifefoundation.com](http://www.schooloflifefoundation.com) or stopping by Stephen Wade Power Sports.

"Every day something new opens up to us," Jack said, noting that the work can be exhausting "but it's a welcome exhaustion."

Looking toward the future of the foundation he said "I'm excited to see where we'll be a year from now."