

Spring 2012

# The TOMS model of social entrepreneurship: The new way of harnessing capitalism to turn a social profit

Kerry Marie Tousignant  
*James Madison University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/honors201019>

---

## Recommended Citation

Tousignant, Kerry Marie, "The TOMS model of social entrepreneurship: The new way of harnessing capitalism to turn a social profit" (2012). *Senior Honors Projects, 2010-current*. 490.  
<https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/honors201019/490>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Honors Projects, 2010-current by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [dc\\_admin@jmu.edu](mailto:dc_admin@jmu.edu).

The TOMS Model of Social Entrepreneurship:  
The New Way of Harnessing Capitalism to Turn a Social Profit

---

A Project Presented to  
the Faculty of the Undergraduate  
College of Integrated Science and Technology  
James Madison University

---

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Bachelor of Social Work

---

by Kerry Marie Tousignant

May 2012

---

---

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Social Work, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Social Work.

FACULTY COMMITTEE:

HONORS PROGRAM APPROVAL:

---

Project Advisor: Karen A. Ford, DSW  
Professor, Social Work

---

Barry Falk, Ph.D.,  
Director, Honors Program

---

Reader: Cynthia Hunter, MSW  
Associate Professor, Social Work

---

Reader: Robert Kolodinsky, Ph.D  
Associate Professor, Management

## **Dedication**

To my amazing parents, Dr. Normand Tousignant and Ms. Marylou Tousignant, who convinced me that I was more than capable of writing an Honors Thesis and helped me believe that I, for my personality, charm, and intellect, am indeed “worth a million bucks,” even if I don’t exactly earn a million for this thesis. I’ll always be grateful for your encouragement, love, and even those times that you asked me “How is your thesis coming along?” May I one day have half the intellectual curiosity (and the combined Master’s degrees) you do. And yes, Dad, this thesis is FINALLY done!

Thank you, too, to all those who have crossed my path at some point during my four years in Harrisonburg. I have been touched by your stories and inspired by your dreams. To the outstanding staff and faculty of the Department of Social Work, the Alternative Break Program, the Office of Community Service-Learning and the Office of Orientation, you have shaped my soul and made me dream bigger than I thought possible.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Abstract	5
One-for-one: The history of TOMS	6
Social entrepreneurship: “Building platforms that unleash human potential”	14
Cause-related marketing versus the one-for-one model	16
Methods	22
Results	
Demographics	24
Socioeconomic background	24
TOMS-specific data	25
TOMS and the one-for-one movement	26
Charitable giving trends	27
Social consciousness	27
Hypothetical situations	28
Discussion	29
Implications for further research	34
Resources	35
Appendix	37
IRB protocol	
Recruitment email, survey	

## **Acknowledgements**

Many thanks to my thesis committee, comprised of the following outstanding faculty members:

Professor Cynthia Hunter, Associate Professor and Director of Field Placement, JMU Department of Social Work,

Dr. Robert Kolodinsky, Associate Professor and Director, JMU Gilliam Center for Ethical Business Leadership,

and Dr. Karen A. Ford, Professor, JMU Department of Social Work, Primary Advisor

I am grateful to you on many counts, but especially for your passion for the fields of nonprofit studies and ethics. Your encouragement and commitment were contagious; and your flexibility – particularly when I hounded you with emails or popped into your offices without warning (I'm thinking of you, Dr. Ford!) – helped see me through the process. My thanks cannot be adequately expressed in words.

## **Abstract**

College students aren't oblivious to philanthropy; in fact, many studies report that millennials comprise one of the largest demographics in favor of philanthropic giving. The James Madison University (JMU) campus has recently seen increased student interest in TOMS Shoes, a company that donates a pair of shoes to a child in need for every pair purchased. The aim of this study was to localize where this interest in charity is coming from in a population with little disposable income. Through online surveys collected from thirty-nine TOMS-owning JMU students, this study explored the factors that have led millennials (also referred to as Generation Y) to support TOMS, and furthermore, what led these students to donate their money to charitable organizations.

This research is useful to the field of nonprofit studies in that it critically analyzed what is and isn't effective in the marketing world when targeting college students ranging in age from 18 to 23. This topic is important to social work because by harnessing capitalism and tying it to social causes, this additional consumer motivation makes philanthropic giving more powerful. With this new practice of connecting charitable causes to consumer wants, social workers and those who work in nonprofit management can consider the ways in which their ethical responsibility to be advocates for the less-fortunate can combine with social entrepreneurship to provide a new model with which to solve social problems.

## **One-for-one: The history of TOMS**

They're not the most attractive type of apparel, but they have headlines from all over the world buzzing. *Rogue Magazine* in the Philippines, *Instyle Magazine* of Korea, *People Magazine* and Bloomberg Online are some of the many outlets publicizing the campaign. CNN Living Online praised this campaign as one of its "Ten Ideas to Change the World." Secretary of State Hillary Clinton presented this CEO with the 2009 Award for Corporate Excellence and Former President Bill Clinton's foundation has further connected/networked the company with government leaders who have helped expand the philanthropy. What has the world abuzz? A simple brand of average-looking shoes. However, TOMS Shoes are unprecedented; for every pair a consumer purchases, a pair is sent to a child in a foreign country in desperate need of shoes. These children need shoes for two purposes: to help them avoid physical deformity as well as to increase their access to education. TOMS has taken the power of consumerism and the bleeding-heart nature of philanthropy and harnessed the two in a movement that has given over one million pairs of shoes in just four years and inspired other one-for-one campaigns internationally.

While it's not unusual to open a style magazine and see a shopping page promoting mid-priced consumer goods to an 18-and-up demographic, TOMS (evolved from the company's original slogan, "Shoes for Tomorrow") has proven itself to be very different from the consumer-shopping norm (Fifield 2010). Creator, CEO and self-proclaimed "Chief Shoe Giver" Blake Mycoskie, 34, was inspired by a trip to Argentina in 2002 where he witnessed how dramatically a pair of shoes could improve the quality of a child's life. In addition to being exposed to debilitating diseases like podoconiosis – swelling, ulcers and deformity in the feet and legs that often ostracize sufferers from their communities – barefoot children in Argentina and many other

worldwide rural communities are not able to attend school without some type of requisite footwear. As a result, they are unable to access a decent education, which narrows their economic earning potential as well as deprives their country of their intellectual and social potential. Mycoskie's trip to Argentina "was the catalyst for him to combine his natural entrepreneurial bent with a strong desire to make the world a better place" (Fifield 2010). Inspired by aid workers in Argentina who had begun their own shoe-giving project, Mycoskie wanted to contribute but wasn't sure how to solve the problems that arose when a child outgrew a pair of shoes. "I didn't want to just write a check and make a donation – because, if I did that, the kids would just get a shoe once... and my financial contribution would only be a very temporary relief," said Mycoskie (Consing Lopez 2010). A four-time entrepreneurial veteran – his successes include a door-to-door laundry service, an advertising agency, a reality television network and an online driver's education school for teens – he decided to put his entrepreneurial background to use once again. "Most people look at problems in the Third World and one word comes to mind: charity. But for me the word 'entrepreneurship' came to mind. And that's why I started TOMS as a for-profit business with our one-for-one model. I knew if we could get people to buy our shoes, and continue to buy our shoes, that I could sustain the giving and that would solve the issue I saw there" (Fifield 2010). The one-for-one model in Mycoskie's approach means that – in his original vision – for every pair of shoes sold to an American buyer, a pair would be given to an Argentine child in need. His approach was based on his idea that the American apparel industry is "an industry obsessed with want" (Consing Lopez 2010). True enough, in a Western, consumer-driven culture, his premise was well received by American buyers. Mycoskie's business began by word of mouth and soon interest in the shoes grew exponentially. In its first year, TOMS donated 10,000 pairs of shoes designed after the



Argentinean *alpargata* style of footwear. In September 2010, only four years after its creation, TOMS gave away its one-millionth pair. TOMS now has 85 full-time employees at its headquarters in Santa Monica, California. Shoe giving has expanded from Argentina to over 25 poverty-stricken nations including Ethiopia, Honduras and Haiti. Walking around the JMU campus it is not unusual to see ten pairs of TOMS in ten minutes.

TOMS and social work are relevant on many levels. Philanthropy, the umbrella under which social entrepreneurship falls, has long been tied to social work. In fact, the term “philanthropy” originated as a social work expression. Merriam-Webster Online defines it as “1) goodwill to fellow men, especially: active effort to promote human welfare” and “2a) a philanthropic act or gift, b) an organization distributing or supported by philanthropic funds” (Merriam-Webster Online). The second definition sounds a lot like what Americans think of philanthropy, but the first definition ties right into social work and is very similar to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)’s Code of Ethics Preamble: “The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (NASW 2008).

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, *philanthropists* were known as “visitors of the poor” and acted much as modern-day social workers do:

The effectiveness of the philanthropic response to the social evils resulted in particular from the movement’s technical inventiveness and distinct discursive strategies. During the late nineteenth century, philanthropic societies in the large cities invented a programme for poor relief, which turned out decisive for modern social work as we know it. *In fact, the philanthropic ‘visitor of the poor’ was in many respects a forerunner of the*

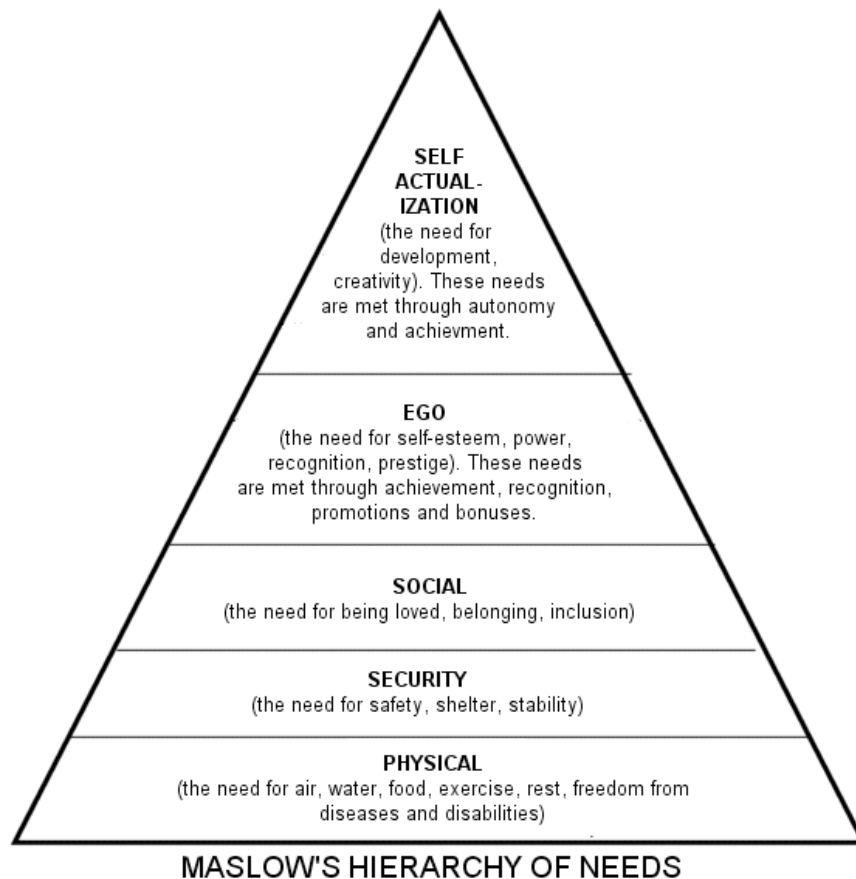
*modern social worker* [Emphasis mine]...Philanthropists worked out methods for home visiting, developed pedagogical principles for counseling, invented contractual agreements and sought to find ways of visualizing the ‘essential humanity’ they assumed to exist within even the most miserable and depraved individual. By so doing, the philanthropist took on the role of being at one and the same time *mediator*, *judge* and caring practitioner of *pastoral power*. (Villadsen, 2007, p.314)

What’s further,

The philanthropists thus took upon themselves the discursive rights of the paupers, representing them to the rest of society – a function later taken up by the modern social worker, who must also mediate by alluding to the underlying social subjectivity within the client when dealing with a judge, police officer, doctor, or local community (Philp, 1979: 99). The philanthropist was to mediate between the antagonistic social classes by describing the potential – but not yet visible – humanity of the pauper, and by working to ‘lift up’ the better part of the poor, awakening their self-esteem and developing their moral standards...Late nineteenth-century philanthropy, then, was decisive in establishing core elements for the constitution of modern social work, i.e. philanthropy’s characteristic discursive strategies, specific technologies, and, by now, classic dilemmas of government. Philanthropy stands at the centre of a political and epistemic complex from which modern social work emerged. (Villadsen, 2007, p. 314-316)

In one JMU social work class, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, students often discuss Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs as a perspective on human behavior. This hierarchy is a ranking of basic needs that every human being strives to attain. On the hierarchy, higher levels may only be attained once lower levels are met. Though in all likelihood Mycoskie did not

consciously create TOMS to fulfill one aspect of Maslow's Hierarchy, his philanthropic shoe giving does in fact help satisfy part of Maslow's most foundational level of needs.



(source: <http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/96-001.htm>)

As the figure above demonstrates, the Physical Needs level includes “freedom from diseases and disabilities.” A pair of TOMS Shoes greatly assists in the prevention of podoconiosis and other debilitating conditions. If a child has a pair of shoes, they are able to expend less energy on Maslow's Physical Needs stage as their susceptibility to conditions and/or diseases is less than that of children without shoes, and could thus focus on other needs such as attaining an education.

Social workers operate mindful of several declarations of ethics and rights. One such declaration, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26, states:

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on his basis of merit” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008).

Education in Argentina and many of the other nations that TOMS serves is not compulsory. If families cannot afford the money to buy their child or children a pair of shoes (or uniform or school supplies), they cannot send them to school. In this sense, even if education is without a price tag, the prerequisites for education are not. What’s more, Section 6.04a of the NASW Code of Ethics states that “Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully” (NASW 2008). Blake Mycoskie is acting in a similar role to that of social worker through his engagement with social action to ensure that children have equal access to education by removing the barrier (shoes) that prevents them from realizing their human needs and full potential through education. He has (perhaps unwittingly) heeded the call for “an approach to social justice work that crosses national, geographic, cultural, organizational, and professional boundaries and expands our thinking along the way” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008) by creating the one-for-one model as a way of addressing social problems. The International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) best sums up Mycoskie’s work to address social problems with the statement: “Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). Mycoskie has shown himself to be the new face of social entrepreneurship as a form of

addressing international social problems. Not only has he helped children in their quest for education (micro-level social work), he has assisted communities by bettering the quality of life of their children (mezzo-level social work) and, we can assume that as long as TOMS is a consistent helping force in the nations it supports, it will become a macro-level force as the children whom have benefited from the program mature into well-educated, productive citizens of their societies. This said, one should not confuse Mycoskie's model with true social work. He is not on the front lines of fighting society's ills; he is a man with a marketing model that benefits a company which acts as that – a company with profit margins, not a nonprofit struggling with financial cuts and few staffers. However, his work does act to ease some of the issues that prevent children from living healthy lives, and for that, this study considers his acts to be a cousin of the social justice movement. Understanding the TOMS movement can lead individuals to a greater understanding of social justice issues and the importance of supporting programs that work to remedy social ills. Hopefully, Mycoskie's concept has encouraged individuals to examine social issues, and the ways Americans look to solve them, more thoroughly.

This literature review of the effects of cause-related marketing on millennials and the following study of the factors behind the TOMS phenomena on the JMU campus is intended to show that TOMS is part of a larger phenomenon and trend in global giving. Internationally-focused charitable organizations proliferate: Heifer International “work[s] with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the earth” (Heifer 2010), (PRODUCT) RED partners with iconic brands to make (RED) products, up to 50% of whose profits are invested in programs that combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in Africa, and more locally, Ten Thousand Villages Store in Harrisonburg, Va., promotes fair-trade produced goods. These are just a few of the

variants of organizations promoting international philanthropy. TOMS is clearly not a company functioning in a charitable vacuum.

While many people of older generations see social work (which was based on the mission of solving social ills) as little more than child-protective service work, TOMS and other forms of social entrepreneurship draw from some social work principles. These movements link consumerism and millennials' seemingly inherent attraction to philanthropy so that cause-based consumerism will soon be the norm for millennials and later generations. In fact, it may become one way for those who do not contribute to charity regularly to still feel that they are able to "give back."

Clearly Mycoskie's marketing concept "of mixing charity and commerce" (Cole 2010) through the one-for-one model has become tremendously popular, but to what does Mycoskie owe his success and how has his campaign differed from more traditional cause-related marketing? What can explain the sudden success of TOMS and their instant popularity on the JMU campus? There are several questions this study was designed to answer through exploratory and explanatory research. Question A, Why has TOMS become so successful among college-aged youth in Harrisonburg, Virginia? Question B, Are millennials (of the JMU community) more likely to buy a product when they know exactly what type of physical charity manifestation the beneficiary is receiving (i.e. a pair of shoes instead of a certain amount of money going toward an indeterminable or undisclosed use)? Question C, does the factor of an international area of need play a role in the likelihood of giving? Question D, Will the one-for-one model eclipse other forms of cause-based giving or has it already happened?

### **Social entrepreneurship: “Building platforms that unleash human potential”**

Bornstein and Davis (2010) define social entrepreneurship as “a process by which citizens build or transform institutions to advance solutions to social problems, such as poverty, illness, illiteracy, environmental destruction, human rights abuses and corruption, in order to make life better for many.” According to their book, *Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know* (2010), social entrepreneurs have always existed, but were formerly known as visionaries, humanitarians, philanthropists, reformers, or just great leaders. Now social entrepreneurship is becoming a global phenomenon, with an explosion of activity in places as diverse as Brazil, India, Thailand, and South Africa. “Authoritarian governments have fallen, education, health care, and communications have been extended to hundreds of millions of families, and economic growth has produced large middle classes. The result has been an explosion of citizen activity, including the establishment of millions of new social-purpose organizations” (Bornstein & Davis, 2010). As these middle classes grow, government social services are not always able to keep up, and the result is that citizens are able to “challenge power and convention in countries where, thirty or forty years ago, they might have been ‘disappeared,’ ‘banned,’ or imprisoned for doing so” (Bornstein & Davis, 2010). As the pace of change has accelerated, our adaptive system must keep pace: “People seeking solutions are no longer willing to wait for governments, corporations, churches, or universities to lead” (Bornstein & Davis, 2010). Greg Dees, whom Bornstein and Davis (2010) refer to as “the father of social entrepreneurship education,” has identified two schools of thought on American enterprise development and innovation. The first places emphasis on organizational strategy, revenue generation, and financial planning, while the second focuses on breakthrough insights. It is this second school of thought that Mycoskie falls under. While he did not invent the idea of

giving shoes, he was the first to use the one-for-one model to channel capitalism to make shoe-giving sustainable.



## **Cause-related marketing versus the one-for-one model**

Cause-related marketing (also known as cause-related giving) has permeated American consumer culture so deeply and for so long that it is hard to separate it from non-cause marketing. Cause-related marketing is defined by [www.businessdictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com) (2010) as “Joint funding and promotional strategy in which a firm's sales are linked (and a percentage of the sales revenue is donated) to a charity or other public cause. However, unlike philanthropy, money spent in cause related marketing is considered an expense and is expected to show a return.” Fritz (2010) further clarifies: “CRM [cause-related marketing] is different from corporate philanthropy because the money gifted is not an outright gift to a nonprofit and therefore is not tax-deductible.” Also vital to understanding these definitions is the assertion made by Wirgau, Farley, & Jensen (2010),

Accepting CRM as a form of consumption philanthropy that is the key to solving problems has at least three underlying premises. First, it assumes that people are not paying attention to the needs of others or that any awareness of how to alleviate those needs is required. Second, it implies that if people are made aware, they will take action through the most convenient means possible: consumption. Lastly, it implies that given the first two assumptions, corporations are the capable and proper conduit for administering aid. (p. 613)

The term cause-related marketing is derived from a 1980s American Express campaign to raise restoration money for the Statue of Liberty. The company made a one-cent donation to the Statue of Liberty whenever their charge card was used, resulting in a 45% increase in the number of new card holders. Card usage increased by 28%, and millions of dollars were raised for the Statue of Liberty (Fritz 2010).

Boston-based incorporation Cone, LLC., believes that a company that chooses to “Cause Brand”, or align itself with a cause for mutual benefits between company and nonprofit, benefits. “Today, a company that directs its unique assets to have a significant and sustainable impact on society will strengthen reputation, employee morale and stakeholder loyalty in an engaging and authentic way” (Cone 2010). Furthermore, Cone believes that the doctrine of Corporate Responsibility, the need for a corporation to act ethically in order to attract consumers, is becoming more important in an increasingly socially conscious market: “The critical concerns of our time are far too complex and significant for any single entity to address on its own. Through collaborative engagement, however, solutions – and opportunities – will not be far behind” (Cone 2010). Hence, the success of Mycoskie’s dual capitalist-philanthropic endeavor; either venture (only a shoe company or only a charity collecting shoes) would not have the success that his dual-resource effort has achieved.

How successful is caused-related marketing and cause branding? According to [causemarketingforum.com](http://causemarketingforum.com) (2010), “A growing philanthropic strategy, cause related marketing helped American Express raise \$1.7 million in 1983 for the Statue of Liberty restoration; it was behind \$9 million McDonald’s gathered for the Ronald McDonald house in 1994; and it’s also the engine through which Avon has generated over \$300 million to date to fight breast cancer worldwide.” In fact, research would suggest that the American public cannot get enough of caused-related marketing. CSRwire, LLC, “The Corporate Social Responsibility Newswire,” submitted a press release in September 2010 on the 2010 Cone Cause Evolution Study. This online survey of 1,057 adults 18 years and older found that 83% of the consumers surveyed “want more of the products, services, and retailers they use to benefit causes” (CSRwire 2010). The 2010 Cone Cause Evolution Study also shows that 41% of the participants purchased a

product in the last year because it was associated with a social or environmental cause.

Furthermore,

- 88% say it is acceptable for companies to involve a cause or issue in their marketing;
- 85% have a more positive image of a product or company when it supports a cause they care about; and,
- 80% are likely to switch brands, similar in price and quality, to one that supports a cause.

(CSRwire 2010)

Of those surveyed, women with children were the most acquiescent to cause-related marketing, with 95% of mothers viewing cause marketing as acceptable (compared to the 88% average) and 61% claiming to purchase cause-related products in the past year (compared to the 41% average). Millennials, which the survey defined as 18-24 years old, were close behind in philanthropic-focused shopping. 94% of millennials surveyed found cause marketing acceptable and 53% purchased cause-related products in the last year. In addition to buying cause-related products, consumers “also seek other higher-touch opportunities, such as lending their voices through ideas or feedback (75%) and volunteerism (72%)” (CSRwire 2010).

Cause branding companies also foster the most loyal employees: 69% of Americans “consider a company's social and environmental commitments when deciding where to work”. Once hired, “employees who are involved in their company's cause efforts are much more likely to feel a sense of pride and loyalty toward their employer”, with 93% of employees proud of their company’s values (versus the 68% working for companies that are unassociated with a cause) and 92% who claim strong loyalty to their company (versus the 61% in cause-unassociated companies) (CSRwire 2010).

Consumers have expectations when it comes to where their money goes, with the plurality of

those surveyed expecting companies to prioritize issues that affect nearby communities. 46% of those surveyed expect companies to keep cause money in the local community, 37% expect money to go to a national cause or causes, and 17% expect companies to address global issues. Consumers want companies to prioritize issues such as economic development (77%), health and disease (77%), hunger (76%), education (75%), access to clean water (74%), disaster relief (73%), and the environment (73%) (CSRwire 2010).

Furthermore, the 2010 Cone Cause Evolution Study found that Americans are expecting more industries than just retail to show support for social or environmental causes through cause branding. The following industries were ranked most highly as industries consumers expect to align with a cause:

- Food and beverage – 82%
- Automotive and transportation – 81%
- Manufacturing – 81%
- Electronics and household appliances – 80%
- Sports, media and entertainment – 80%
- Retail (stores and online) – 79%
- Financial services (e.g. banking, insurance, investing) – 79%
- Health and beauty – 78%
- Telecommunications – 78%
- Household goods and furniture – 77%
- Footwear and apparel – 77%
- Professional services (e.g. law firms) – 76%

(Cone 2010)

While only 77% of Americans expect cause branding from the footwear and apparel industry, if TOMS is any indication, this is a field quickly surpassing other industries in cause-related marketing.

Philanthropies need not fear that their donations will dwindle if they're unassociated with a product or industry, however; 86% of Americans in the Cause Evolution Study (2010) "say purchasing a cause-related product does not replace their traditional donation(s) to their favorite charities". Philanthropy is up 9% since Cone's last study was conducted in 2008. Clearly philanthropy is not dying out; it has played a large role in the success of a variety of companies and industries that chose to cause brand. Mycoskie's approach in tying consumerism to philanthropy is nothing new, but what has yet to be determined is exactly why his product has had exponential success with the millennial age bracket.

Cause branding is not without its critics, however. Samantha King, in her book *Pink Ribbons, Inc.* (2006), critically examines the breast cancer awareness cause-related marketing movement. Ms. King claims that the implications of this movement "repackage charity 'as a lifestyle choice through which individuals can attain self-actualization and self-realization through their roles as consumers'" (Wirgau et al., 2010, p. 613). Eikenberry and Nickel (2006), "argue 'the surface debate about who ought to deliver social policy disguises the issues that social policy represents.'" Eikenberry (2009) continues, "consumption philosophy 'devalues the moral core of philanthropy by making virtuous action easy and thoughtless... [meanwhile] a benevolent philanthropic agenda... would give voice to those who suffer'" (Wirgau et al., 2010). Youde (2009), meanwhile, when looking at (RED), notes that although the program is not a solution, it offers a way to augment public monies spent on social ills like AIDS. (RED) spokesman Jay Strell would agree. In 2007 he reported to *McClatchy – Tribune Business News*,

“We are tapping into money that would otherwise never have gone to the Global Fund... it’s not about promoting mindless consumerism. It’s about empowering consumers and helping them make an informed choice about the things they were going to buy, regardless.” He continued, “Research shows it’s not an either-or situation. People will contribute to local charities and will still participate in things like (RED). What we’re doing is giving people an additional choice here.” (Klimkiewicz, 2007, p. 1).

The data analyzed in this research is useful to the field of nonprofit studies in that it analyzes what is and isn’t effective in the marketing world when targeting college-aged youth, primarily through focusing on TOMS as a case example. This topic is important to social work because by harnessing capitalism and tying it to social causes, this additional consumer motivation makes philanthropic giving more powerful.

## Methods

An Internet survey launched through the institutional data-collecting software Qualtrics was administered to forty-seven students. Comprised of seventy-two questions, the survey asked about the subject's demographic background, income, motivation in buying or acquiring TOMS, and other charitable giving habits. The survey was composed of both multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions. Subjects were recruited through the JMU TOMS Campus Club. A template email was sent from the researcher to the club president, who then forwarded the email to the club listserv, comprised of approximately 200 members. Access to the survey was limited to club members due to a password that only the researcher and prospective subjects knew. Prospective subjects were screened so that only subjects who owned a pair of TOMS were permitted to complete the survey.

Subjects answered anywhere between one and seventy-two questions. Many questions were dependent on previous answers. Forty-seven students entered the survey and signed the consent form, but eight of those students responded that they did not own a pair of TOMS and were thus eliminated from the rest of the survey. Therefore, thirty-nine students completed the entire survey.

The main purpose of this study was to determine why full-time (twelve or more credit-bearing) college students, who typically do not work full-time jobs and therefore make under \$2,000 dollars per year, are willing to pay between \$44 and \$79 for a pair of shoes. The researcher predicted that college students are indeed more likely to buy a product when they know what tangible benefit the beneficiary will receive, which may help explain the marketing success behind TOMS to the 18- to 22-year-old demographic. In addition, the researcher believed that the "cinch" factor that drew such attention to TOMS was its basis on foreign

children. The researcher suspected that subjects would be less likely to purchase TOMS if the company was focused on donating shoes to American children.



## **Results**

### **Demographics**

97% of subjects identified themselves as female. The plurality (36%) were 18 at the time of the survey. 28% were 19, 8% were 20, 23% were 21, 3% were 22, and 3% identified as “Other.” 62% identified as freshmen or sophomores; 36% as juniors or seniors, 0% as fifth-year seniors and 3% as transfers. No trends were obvious in the subjects’ majors or intended careers. The majority (92%) live in a two-parent household. 74% have siblings. Questions about the highest level of education the first and, if applicable, the second parent or guardian had took the shape of a bell curve. The minimum level of education a parent or guardian received was a high school degree; the maximum was a doctoral degree, with the plurality having a bachelor’s or four-year degree.

### **Socioeconomic background**

51% were raised in a middle-class family. 13% identified as lower middle class and 33% as upper middle class. 3% identified as upper class. 21% pay all or some part of their own tuition; for 74%, one or both of their parents or guardians pay some part or all of their tuition; for 5%, other family members pay all or some part of their tuition; 18% receive a scholarship that pays for some or all of their tuition; and 49% receive student loans that pay all or some part of tuition.

69% (27 subjects) do not receive an allowance from their parents or guardians; the twelve students who do receive between \$24 and \$700 a month. The majority of those receive under \$120/month. No subjects receive disability or other public income support.

38% work one or more steady jobs during the school year. In a month, those 15 students earn between \$80 and \$800. In contrast, 90% work one or more steady jobs during the summer

or winter breaks. A few work as unpaid workers and seven receive \$1,000 or more per month. The rest fall in-between those parameters.

### **TOMS-specific data**

36% own one pair of TOMS, 33% own two, 15% own three, 3% own four, and 13% own four or more pairs. The majority (69%) purchased their TOMS, in comparison to the 28% who received them as a gift or the 3% who received them as a hand-me-down. Of the 25 who owned two or more pairs, 60% purchased their second pair and 40% were gifted their second pair. As the number of pairs owned continues, the greater the likelihood that the most recent pair was a gift.

95% of subjects believe that TOMS produces attractive shoes. All subjects reported that they appreciate TOMS' cause the most among all the factors behind the creation of the shoe company. 85% cited comfort and 69% cited attractiveness/style as important factors in their support of the company. Of those who purchased at least one pair of TOMS (31 subjects), the factors playing the largest roles in their decision to do so were cause (65%), attractiveness/style (26%), and comfort (10%).

When asked where they first learned about TOMS, 74% said a friend or peer, 26% through print media, and less than 20% each through a family member, the TOMS website, or a social networking website. It is worth noting that Mycoskie visited the JMU campus in May 2010 as the graduation commencement speaker. A question about his visit was included in the survey but was later discounted due to invalidity. After first learning about TOMS, within one week, 3% of subjects bought or acquired a pair; within one month, 31%; within six months, 36%; within twelve months, 18%; at twelve months or later, 13%. The majority (64%) spent between \$50-60 on each pair.

The mission behind TOMS is two-fold. Not only do shoes prevent individuals from contracting potentially fatal diseases, but they also allow poor children to get an education when many schools require a full uniform, including shoes. When asked which causes they were familiar with, of those who purchased their own TOMS, 26% knew about disease prevention, 6% knew about education promotion, 55% were aware of both causes, and 13% were unaware of these causes. For those who knew of these causes, all said the causes factored either “a little bit” or “definitely yes” in their decision to purchase a pair.

Of those who purchased TOMS, 84% would still have purchased if shoes were given to American children instead of children abroad. 16% felt “I don’t know.” 59% were neutral when asked if they would be more likely to buy TOMS if they supported American children, in comparison to 15% who would be more likely and 26% who would not be more likely.

97% of subjects received peer feedback about their TOMS. Of that 97%, 92% have received positive feedback, and the remaining 8% received neutral feedback (0% received negative feedback). Feedback has centered on attractiveness (87%), causes (71%), price (29%), wear and tear (21%) and other (3%). 55% find that feedback has not influenced their decision to purchase another pair of TOMS. Feedback has affected 66% of subjects in recommending TOMS to others. All 39 subjects (100%) have recommended TOMS to others. The majority of subjects recommended TOMS to friends or family. When asked why, answers ranged from cause to style and attractiveness or comfort.

### **TOMS and the one-for-one movement**

The one-for-one model prompted 97% of TOMS buyers to purchase their pair. 79% of TOMS owners have not supported the one-for-one model through other companies or charities;

those who have supported the one-for-one model have bought products ranging from eyeglasses to bottles of Dawn dish soap and other miscellaneous items.

### **Charitable giving trends**

The act of charitable consumerism, buying a product to support a cause or supporting a cause with the expectation of a tangible reward, was supported less than once a month by 28%, once a month by 28%, 2-3 times a month by 26%, and more frequently by less than 3% of subjects. 10% “never” participate in charitable consumerism. The remaining 90% receive products of an apparel nature, mainly bracelets, t-shirts, reusable bags, and water bottles or hot beverage mugs.

Slightly more reported participation in charitable giving without personal gain. Only 8% responded that they “never” participate in unrewarded giving. The remaining 92% support both national organizations (Invisible Children, Susan G. Komen, and Habitat for Humanity among the most oft-cited) and local groups (homeless shelters and church drives among the most popular).

### **Social consciousness**

85% of subjects volunteer, which was defined as “give your time without expectation of monetary benefit.” The data shows a bell curve around the length of time of volunteering at around 5 to 6 years, with a select few having volunteered for between 11 and 15 years. The majority of subjects volunteered or currently volunteer with multiple organizations, ranging from people services (soup kitchens and child mentoring) to some environmental work. Several (36%) volunteer through their churches or religious groups.

69% support their community by buying locally.

Subjects were asked to view a list of ten societal issues and rank their priorities in order of those they are most likely to support through money or volunteering time. 27 of 39 subjects (69%) ranked Hunger as their #1 or #2 priority. 10 of 39 (25%) ranked Environment as their second-to-least likely cause to support. 13 of 39 (33%) ranked Economic Development as their least-likely cause to support.

### **Hypothetical situations**

Subjects read four hypothetical situations and ranked them on a scale of 1-4, with 1 equaling “most likely to support” and 4 equaling “least likely to support”. 24 of 39 (61%) ranked the following scenario a 1: “Buying a product, aware that the same product is going to an individual in need (the one-for-one model)”. In comparison, 20% preferred “Donating money to a cause without expectation of a return (charitable giving),” 15% chose “Buying a product where a portion of the proceeds go to a cause,” and 2% selected “Supporting a cause monetarily and receiving a ‘free’ gift in return.”

Subjects were given four scenarios in which they were asked to rank their likelihood of buying a mug depending on its level of attractiveness and the cause it supported. To no surprise, 94% preferred buying an attractive mug that supports their first-choice cause. However, the real question was how subjects would preference the next two options. As their second choice, 76% chose an unattractive mug that supports their first-choice cause over an attractive mug that supports their last-choice cause.

## Discussion

The collected data challenged some of the researcher's expectations. TOMS-specific data proved the importance of peer influence on the success of the brand. 74% of TOMS-owning JMU students learned about the brand through a friend or peer, in comparison to the 18% who discovered the TOMS website. This information is pertinent to the success of TOMS. While peer approval is high, as 100% of subjects have recommended TOMS to others, it appears that TOMS' success is limited by its popularity between the 18- and 23-year-old demographic. As long as young adults promote TOMS, there will be a market for peers to eagerly support the cause. However, the website is not the first impression for the majority of millennial-aged potential buyers. Should TOMS want to widen its appeal to other demographics, it will need to adjust its outreach through social media accordingly.

Peer feedback has played a crucial role in the success of the brand. Of the 38 subjects who received peer feedback of their TOMS, 66% reported that feedback affected their decision to recommend the brand to others. It is not news that young adults are susceptible to peer influence. Yet in this case, what a peer thinks of the brand can actually affect if the owner recommends the brand to others. TOMS (probably unknowingly) benefits from a cyclical pattern of consumerism. If feedback is positive (which 92% of subjects reported) or neutral (8%), the millennial TOMS owner will recommend TOMS to others. However, this inference was made cautiously due to the fact that no subjects reported receiving negative feedback.

The one-for-one model behind the success of TOMS seems to be limited to that brand, as 79% of subjects have supported the one-for-one model only through TOMS. Considering that the model is relatively new, it is possible that companies with similar methods will see success akin to that of TOMS in the near future. In the present, TOMS has a monopoly on one-for-one

branding for the millennial generation. One question posed a hypothetical situation in which subjects were asked to rank their preferences out of four options. The plurality chose the one-for-one model of giving as their first choice; second was the option to donate money to a cause without any sort of tangible reward; third was to buy a product with a portion of those proceeds being donated to a cause; last was to support a cause monetarily and receive a free gift. Though this question was limited by showing trends among the entire subject body instead of each individual's rankings, it is interesting that of this profiled population, after supporting the one-for-one model, subjects would choose to donate without expecting a return. One motivating factor behind the success of TOMS is the consumer urge to buy, buy and buy. Buying a pair of TOMS supports the cause, of course, but it also allows the consumer to give while buying a product they would have purchased anyway. So does the third most preferred choice, to purchase a product from which a portion of the proceeds go to a cause. One might think that the millennial generation, which typically does not have a lot of economic security, would prefer to give money when a reward is promised. Since the data suggests otherwise, it says something about the TOMS-owning population at JMU that the second most popular choice was to give money directly to charity without personal benefit.

Of the types of causes subjects favored, there were two interesting findings. First, 51% are more likely to financially support domestic issues over international causes; the remaining 49% are more likely to financially support international causes over domestic ones. Though this data is not TOMS-specific, it did disprove the researcher's theory that millennials, defined in this study as JMU students ages 18-22, are attracted to international needs more than domestic ones. When it was asked if the subject's likelihood of buying TOMS would change if the focus was on American children, 84% said they would have still bought TOMS if shoes were given to

American children instead of foreign children. The remaining 16% said, simply, “I don’t know.” Only 15% said they would be *more likely* to buy TOMS if shoes were given to American children instead of foreign children. 26% reported “No” and 59% reported, “It wouldn’t impact my decision one way or the other (neutral).”

Second, when given a list of ten causes and asked to rank them from most to least likely to favor, 69% of subjects ranked “Hunger” as their first or second priority. “Environment” and “Economic development” were among the least likely favored. The remaining causes included “Health and disease,” “Education,” “Access to clean water,” “Disaster relief,” “Homelessness,” “Anti-crime/violence prevention,” and “Equal rights/diversity.” Most of these causes ranked between the fourth place and seventh place of priority. In interpreting this finding, it is important to remember that subjects were not asked to identify their race or ethnicity. As such, it is entirely possible, rather, likely that the population was not representative of minority groups. Several of the causes ranked in the middle of the ten given options may claim significant stakeholders in minority populations – for example, “Education,” “Anti-crime/violence prevention” and “Equal rights/diversity,” which are fields known to affect the Black or African-American population to a greater degree than the Caucasian population. In addition, in a study conducted by Cone LLC in 2010, consumers want companies to prioritize issues such as economic development (77%), health and disease (77%), hunger (76%), education (75%), access to clean water (74%), disaster relief (73%), and the environment (73%). This study did not detail the size or demographic makeup of its subjects but labeled itself representative of the average American consumer. Thus, one can make the assumption that the study profiled adults above the age of 18. There are value differences between Cone’s “average” consumer and this study’s data collected from millennials. Economic development and the environment, while least-favored among the subjects of this



study, were prioritized by 77% and 73%, respectively, of the Cone subjects. This comparison suggests that priorities and values at this point in time between the millennial population and the “average American” are very different. This may be due to the idealism of today’s college students, individuals who are not facing the realities of the adult working world until that dreaded graduation date; instead, they are protected by a bright, curious, and, in the particular case of the JMU campus, energetic community and beautiful location. The reality of the American economy may not affect this population the same way it affects the average consumer. Environmental issues, ranked as one of students’ least-favored causes, is still on the minds of 73% Americans, according to Cone LLC. To put it simply, millennials at JMU do not prioritize the same social causes that older Americans do.

It is difficult to make a few inferences about this research due to the lack of institutional research regarding the likelihood of current JMU students to volunteer, buy locally or give to charity. That said, a few trends were observed among this study of TOMS-owning students. 28% reported being charitable consumers once a month; 26%, between two and three times a month. Despite the lack of data in comparison to the general student body, these seem like relatively high numbers for a group that makes less than \$2,000 a year. 69% of subjects buy locally, and 85% volunteer. Those numbers are remarkable. This subject pool appears to be a very socially conscious group. When asked to rank the likelihood of buying an unattractive cause-related coffee mug that supports their favorite cause versus purchasing an attractive mug that supports their least-favorite cause, thirty of thirty-nine subjects ranked the latter option as their second choice. Thirty of thirty-nine subjects ranked the former option as their third choice. It appears that unattractiveness wins over beauty when subjects have identified and prioritized causes.

At the onset of the study, the researcher sought to answer four questions:

- A, Why has TOMS become so successful among college-aged youth in Harrisonburg, Virginia?
- B, Are millennials more likely to buy a product when they know exactly what type of physical charity manifestation the beneficiary is receiving?
- C, Does the factor of an international area of need play a role in the likelihood of giving?
- D, Will the one-for-one model eclipse other forms of cause-based giving or has it already happened?

Some, but not all, of these questions have been explained through the collected data. TOMS appears to have become profitable due to two main themes: its cause and focus on children and the practicality and comfort of its product. The majority of subjects (79%) have not purchased other items through charities using the one-for-one model. Thus, it seems that either something about TOMS has made them popular, or the one-for-one model simply has not been embraced and adapted by many other companies. Only 10% never support charitable consumerism in other ways beyond TOMS. Only 8% never participate in charitable or philanthropic giving where there is no anticipated reward. The rest seem to give to charity, whether through charitable giving or charitable consumerism, fairly often. The international focus of TOMS did not seem to be a main factor behind its appeal to those who eventually purchased TOMS, however, there was no distinction made in the survey about the likelihood of giving to international versus domestic causes beyond the TOMS brand. Thus, conclusions cannot be drawn about the foreign issues and the role they play in encouraging or discouraging charitable contributions. Last, those who support the one-for-one model tend to be reliable supporters of charity. Whether they are more or less likely to donate time and/or money to charity than those who do not own TOMS is unclear.

### **Implications for further research**

Some limitations affected these findings and thus, more exploration of the study focus (millennials and charitable giving) is necessary. Those some resources found in the literature review located trends in charitable giving among older adults, future research could be designed with a cross-sectional perspective. Adults of ages not profiled in this study (above 22 years old) are not oblivious to TOMS. They may have insight into the development of charitable giving over several decades. Their strength lies in their years of experience and this strength should be tapped before the generation has passed and this potentially valuable information is lost. Chances are that many individuals of this cohort have given money to charitable causes over time and may have a different perspective on cause-related marketing than the millennial generation.

Due to the difficulty of surveying a broader population, only TOMS-owning students were surveyed. Further research should look into the answers gained from this study in comparison to the subjects' non-TOMS-owning peers. While the research gathered is relevant to the TOMS-owning student population, it would be more insightful information if viewed in the context of the entire student body.

Future studies should be mindful of demographic differences. This study did not ask subjects to identify their race or ethnicity, so conclusions about trends in giving among minority or majority populations must be carefully and mindfully made. Furthermore, 97% of subjects identified themselves as female, so this sample was not representative of the male-female student ratio of the JMU campus. Conclusions cannot be drawn regarding female students, either, because they are not in the context of the greater student body. Further research could survey this population in regards to the whole.

## References

Bornstein, D., & Davis, S. (2010). *Social entrepreneurship: What everyone needs to know*.

New York: Oxford University Press.

Businessdictionary.com. (2010). Definition: Cause related marketing. Retrieved from

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/cause-related-marketing.html>

Cole, P. (2010). Toms free shoe plan, boosted by Clinton, reaches million mark. Retrieved

October 10, 2010, from

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-09-16/toms-shoe-giveaway-for-kids-boosted-by-bill-clinton-reaches-million-mark.html>

Cone LLC. (2010). Cause branding. Retrieved from <http://www.coneinc.com/cause-branding>

Cone LLC. (2010). *Who's responsible?* Retrieved from

[http://www.coneinc.com/stuff/contentmgr/files/0/cf74da665fc5fc431ef056e98b4e0473/files/who\\_\\_s\\_responsible\\_cone\\_2010\\_shared\\_responsibility\\_pov.pdf](http://www.coneinc.com/stuff/contentmgr/files/0/cf74da665fc5fc431ef056e98b4e0473/files/who__s_responsible_cone_2010_shared_responsibility_pov.pdf)

Consing Lopez, L.A. (2010). California dreamer. *Rogue Magazine*, the Philippines. Retrieved

from

<http://www.toms.com/blog/TOMS-Consing-Lopez-Magazine-July-2010>

CSRwire. (2010). Even as cause marketing Grows, 83 percent of consumers still want to see

more. CSRwire Press Release. Retrieved from

[http://www.csrwire.com/press\\_releases/30556-Even-as-Cause-Marketing-Grows-83-Percent-of-Consumers-Still-Want-to-See-More-](http://www.csrwire.com/press_releases/30556-Even-as-Cause-Marketing-Grows-83-Percent-of-Consumers-Still-Want-to-See-More-)

Fifield, W. (2010). Not business as usual: TOMS shoes helps children in need, two shoes at

a time. *The Costco Connection*, September 2010 issue. Retrieved from

<http://www.Fifield2010connection.com/connection/201009?pg=12#pg27>

- Finn, J.L. and Jacobson, M. (2008). *Just practice: A social justice approach to social work*.  
United States of America: Eddie Bowers Publishing Co., Inc.
- Fritz, J. (2010). Cause-related marketing. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from  
<http://nonprofit.about.com/od/glossary/g/crm.htm>
- Klimkiewicz, J. (2007, Jul 11). Resisting charity-chic. *McClatchy - Tribune Business News*, p. 1.  
Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/465628423?accountid=11667>
- Villadsen, K. (2007). The emergence of 'Neo-Philanthropy': A new discursive space in welfare  
policy? *Acta Sociologica*, 50(309), doi: 10.1177/0001699307080938
- Wirgau, J. S., Farley, K. W., & Jensen, C. (2010). Is business discourse colonizing philanthropy?  
A critical discourse analysis of (PRODUCT) RED. *Voluntas*, 21(4), 611-630.  
doi:10.1007/s11266-010-9122-z

**Appendix**

i. IRB protocol

<i>Expedited</i>	<p><i>James Madison University</i></p> <p><b>HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW REQUEST</b></p>	<i>Expedited</i>
------------------	--	------------------

<p><b>Investigators:</b> This form is required for Expedited review for all JMU research involving human subjects. If you are eligible for an exemption request, please use the alternate forms at:  <a href="http://www.jmu.edu/sponsprog/irb/irbExemptionRequest.doc">http://www.jmu.edu/sponsprog/irb/irbExemptionRequest.doc</a>   <a href="http://www.jmu.edu/sponsprog/irb/irbFullBoardRequest.doc">http://www.jmu.edu/sponsprog/irb/irbFullBoardRequest.doc</a></p>	<p><b>FOR IRB USE ONLY:</b>                  Protocol Number: IRB- _____                   Received: _____      1<sup>st</sup> Review: _____                   2<sup>nd</sup> Review: _____                   3<sup>rd</sup> Review: _____</p>
<p><b>Reviewer:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Approved</b>      Date: _____</p>
<p><b>Reviewer:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Disapproved</b>      Date: _____</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Exempt</b>      Date: _____</p>

**External Funding:**       YES       NO      If YES, Sponsor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Project Title:</b>	The TOMS Model of Social Entrepreneurship: The New Way of Harnessing Capitalism to Turn a Social Profit					
<b>Project Dates:</b>	From: 06/01/11	To: 05/05/12	<b>Minimum Number of Participants</b>	10		
(Not to exceed 1 yr minus 1 day)	MM/DD/YY	MM/DD/YY	<b>Maximum Number of Participants</b>	20		
<b>Responsible Researcher(s):</b>	Kerry M. Tousignant		<b>Department:</b>	Social Work		
<b>E-mail:</b>	tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu		<b>Address</b>	1817 H Putter Court. Harrisonburg, VA 22801		
<b>Telephone:</b>	(703) 946-9513		<b>(MSC):</b>	n/a		
<b>Please select:</b>	Visiting	Adjunct	Research	Administrator/	Undergrad	Graduate
<input type="checkbox"/> Faculty	<input type="checkbox"/> Faculty	<input type="checkbox"/> Faculty	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Student
(if Applicable):						
<b>Research Advisor:</b>	Dr. Karen Ford		<b>Department:</b>	Social Work		

<b>E-mail:</b>	fordka@jmu.edu	<b>Address</b>	800 S. Main St. Harrisonburg, Va. 22801
<b>Telephone:</b>	540-568-6975	<b>(MSC):</b>	4303

**Investigator: Please respond to the questions below. The IRB will utilize your responses to evaluate your protocol submission.**

1.  **YES**  **NO** Does the James Madison University Institutional Review Board define the project as *research*?

The James Madison University IRB defines "research" as a "systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to *generalizable knowledge*." All research involving human participants conducted by James Madison University faculty, staff, and students is subject to IRB review.

2.  **YES**  **NO** Are the human participants in your study *living* individuals?

"Individuals whose physiologic or behavioral characteristics and responses are the object of study in a research project. Under the federal regulations, human subjects are defined as: living individual(s) about whom an investigator conducting research obtains: (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual; or (2) identifiable private information."

3.  **YES**  **NO** Will you obtain data through *intervention* or *interaction* with these individuals?

"Intervention" includes both physical procedures by which data are gathered (e.g., measurement of heart rate or venipuncture) and manipulations of the participant or the participant's environment that are performed for research purposes. "Interaction" includes communication or interpersonal contact between the investigator and participant (e.g., surveying or interviewing).

4.  **YES**  **NO** Will you obtain *identifiable private information* about these individuals?

"Private information" includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, or information provided for specific purposes which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (e.g., a medical record or student record). "Identifiable" means that the identity of the participant may be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information (e.g., by name, code number, pattern of answers, etc.).

5.  **YES**  **NO** Does the study present *more than minimal risk* to the participants?

"Minimal risk" means that the risks of harm or discomfort anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Note that the concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes psychological, emotional, or behavioral risk as well as risks to employability, economic well being, social standing, and risks of civil and criminal liability.

---

**CERTIFICATIONS:**

For James Madison University to obtain a Federal Wide Assurance (FWA) with the Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, **all** research





Principal Investigator Signature

Date

---

---

Principal Investigator Signature

Date

---

---

Faculty Advisor Signature

Date

Submit an electronic version of your **ENTIRE** protocol to [jmu\\_grants@jmu.edu](mailto:jmu_grants@jmu.edu).

Provide a **SIGNED** hard copy of the Research Review Request Form to:

Office of Sponsored Programs, MSC 5728, James Madison Administrative Complex, Bldg #6, Suite 26

## **Purpose and Objectives:**

The purpose of this study is to collect data on James Madison University students' charitable giving trends. The JMU campus has seen an explosion in interest over the past two years in TOMS Shoes, a charitable organization that donates a pair of shoes to a child in need for every pair purchased. The aim of this study is to localize where this interest in charity is coming from in a population with little disposable income. Through internet surveys collected from no less than ten and no more than twenty JMU students, this study will aim to explore what factors lead millennials to donate their money and/or time to charitable organizations, with a spotlight on TOMS Shoes as a focus example. The knowledge gleaned from this study will be of assistance to the fields of philanthropy and social work so that professionals in these specialties can consider the ways in which their ethical responsibility to be advocates for the less-fortunate can combine with social entrepreneurship to provide a new model with which to solve social problems.

As millennials have proven reliably supportive of international philanthropic giving, this research will attempt to prove what factors make for a millennial-approved product so that ultimately, in addition to the projected benefits for the areas of philanthropy and social work, the field of marketing will be able to analyze these tactics in order to improving its appeals to millennials.

Several broad themes will be explored through this research: Theme A, Why has TOMS become so successful among college-aged youth, addressed henceforth as "millennials", in Harrisonburg, Virginia? Theme B, Are millennials more likely to buy a product when they know exactly what type of physical charity manifestation the beneficiary is receiving? (i.e. a pair of shoes instead of a percentage of funds?). Theme C, does the factor of an international arena of

need play a role in the likelihood of giving? Theme D, Will the one-for-one model eclipse other forms of cause-based giving or has it already happened?

**Procedures/Research Design/Methodology/Timeframe:**

Research design of this study is a survey, with results summarized in the form of percentages, tables, and/or graphs. Research will be cross-sectional and exploratory, as much of the sought-after information is unavailable in traditional social work or philanthropic texts. This research may be applied to the fields of social work, philanthropy, and marketing. While it is intrinsically satisfying to the researcher, the researcher hopes that it will provide guidance to the aforementioned fields and change the way these fields think about social entrepreneurship as a method with which to solve social problems.

The researcher does not anticipate more than minimal risk to the subjects of this study. Subjects will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that they may withdraw at any point during the study. The survey includes questions about socioeconomic status, income, and spending patterns of the subject. Other questions concern the subject's attitude toward philanthropic giving. The researcher does not anticipate any potentiality of psychological or physical harm for the subject. In the final copy of the document, subjects may be referred to by their age, academic year and references to their socioeconomic upbringing, income, and spending patterns may be made. This information may be displayed both through in-text references and also through graphs, tables, and charts. Names and other identifying information will not be recorded. Any other confidential information will be destroyed within one year of the thesis's submission to the JMU Honors Program.

To increase interest in the study, the chief researcher will be raffling a pair of Classic TOMS, valued at \$54, to one participant. This will be paid for by the researcher.

This study will begin upon IRB approval (anticipated October 2011) and end within one year, with results intended for inclusion in the researcher's Honors Thesis submission to the JMU Honors Program in December 2011.

**Data Analysis:**

Firsthand data results, such as the researcher's written notes and printed survey results, will remain in the primary researcher's possession for the duration of the study and may be shared as needed with the faculty advisor. All reports will be destroyed within one year of the study's submission to the JMU Honors Program.

**Reporting Procedures:**

The primary audience reached in this study is the social work faculty and the Honors Program of James Madison University. The primary purpose of this study is to assist in the development of an honors thesis. Beyond that, the researcher hopes that the study will be of interest to professionals in the marketing, philanthropy, and social work fields. A copy of the report will be sent to the TOMS organization, as well. There is the possibility that the research and thesis may be presented at regional conferences after its completion.

This study will be referenced in the researcher's Senior Honors Thesis. This thesis will be made available to the faculty of the James Madison University department of social work and will be available online through the JMU libraries website.

Subjects will have access to the final version of the Honors Thesis upon its completion and submission to the Honors Program.

**Experience of the researcher (and advisor, *if student*):**

The researcher has taken and passed the following courses: MATH 220, Elementary Statistics, and SOWK 305, Social Work Research Methods. This is her first time performing research with human subjects.

The advisor, Karen Ford, DSW, has been a member of the Social Work faculty since 1996. During that time she has published 8 articles, 5 of which are based on survey results and analysis with other works using qualitative methods. Additionally she has been the primary investigator and co-developer for the Harrisonburg & Rockingham County Comprehensive Youth Survey from 1996 through 2007. She has recently completed a statewide survey and its analysis for the Governor's Office on Substance Abuse Programming. She has also administered and analyzed surveys for other school districts and nonprofits. Dr. Ford also teaches Research Methods on a rotating basis.

**Additional Attachments as applicable:**

Consent forms

Letters of permission

Cover letter(s)

Questionnaire

Tests

Additional attachments relevant to the study

**Recruitment Email – sent to members of the JMU TOMS Campus Club**

Dear fellow student,

My name is Kerry Tousignant and I am a senior social work major at James Madison University. I am conducting my senior honor thesis on college students' perceptions of charitable giving, with TOMS shoes as a spotlight.

I have created a Qualtrics survey that asks a range of questions about income, charitable giving patterns, and one's attitude toward TOMS shoes. Completion of the survey will take approximately thirty minutes of your time. Only students who own at least one pair of TOMS shoes are eligible to participate. **One participant will be randomly selected to win a pair of Classic TOMS, valued at \$54.**

I hope this survey is of interest to you. To take it, please follow the link below (password: SurveyTOMS).

[http://jmu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6z1sWwwUOLCD8Jm](http://jmu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6z1sWwwUOLCD8Jm)

The survey will be live for five days. At the end of the survey, you will be able to enter your contact information to be entered in the drawing for a free pair of TOMS.

Questions can be sent to me at [tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu) or to research advisor Dr. Karen Ford at [fordka@jmu.edu](mailto:fordka@jmu.edu).

Thank you for your consideration,

Kerry M. Tousignant

Primary researcher

tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu

Karen A. Ford

Research advisor

fordka@jmu.edu

## **Kerry Tousignant – Thesis Questions – from Qualtrics**

- The majority of the multiple-choice questions allow participants to select only one answer; if this is not the case it is noted
- Questions listed without answer options provided are fill-in-the-blank

## **Q1**

### **Informed Consent Form**

#### **Introduction**

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Kerry M. Tousignant from James Madison University. The purpose of this study is to determine college students' attitudes toward charitable giving, with a focus on TOMS shoes as a spotlight charity. Only students who own at least one pair of TOMS shoes are eligible to participate. This study will contribute to the student's completion of her senior honors thesis.

#### **Procedures**

The research study consists of the following Internet survey. It will take approximately thirty minutes of your time. Upon completion, Qualtrics will send the data results to the researcher.

#### **Risks/Discomforts**

The investigator does not perceive more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study.

#### **Benefits**

There are no direct benefits for participation, though participants will be entered into a random drawing to win a pair of Classic TOMS.

#### **Confidentiality**

The data collected will be stored in the HIPAA-compliant, Qualtrics-secure database until it has been deleted by the primary investigator. The results of this research will be presented to the Honors Program of James Madison University but no individuals besides the primary researcher will have access to identifying information.

#### **Compensation**

Upon completion of the study, participants will be entered into a random drawing to win a pair of Classic TOMS, valued at \$54. Only one participant will win.

#### **Participation**

Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at anytime or



refuse to participate entirely without jeopardy to your academic status, GPA or standing with the university. If you desire to withdraw, please close your internet browser and notify the principal investigator at this email: [tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu).

### **Questions about the Research**

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact principal researcher Kerry Tousignant at [tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:tousigkm@dukes.jmu.edu).

### **Questions about your Rights as Research Participants**

If you have questions you do not feel comfortable asking the researcher, you may contact Dr. Karen Ford, 540-568-6975, MSC 4303, [fordka@jmu.edu](mailto:fordka@jmu.edu). Or contact the director of James Madison University's Institutional Review Board, Dr. David Cockley, 540-568-2834, [cocklede@jmu.edu](mailto:cocklede@jmu.edu).

## **Q2**

**I have read and understand the above consent form and desire of my own free will to participate in this study.**

Yes  
No

*Selecting "Yes" takes them to question 4; selecting "No" takes them to the end of the survey.*

## **Q67**

**Do you own a pair of TOMS?**

Yes  
No

*Selecting "No" takes them to the end of the survey.*

## **Q4**

**With what gender do you identify?**

Male  
Female  
Transgender  
Prefer not to answer

## Q5

**How old are you?**

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- Other

## Q6

**What is your class standing?**

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Fifth-year senior
- Transfer

## Q7

**What is/are your major(s)?**

## Q8

**What is your desired or intended career?**

## Q9

**What is your family structure? (choose all applicable). For example, a student with two parents and a sibling would check "two-parent household" AND "have siblings."**

- Two-parent household
- One-parent household
- Live with extended family
- Have siblings

## Q10

**What is the highest level of education your first parent or guardian attained?**

Grammar school  
Some high school  
High school degree  
Some college  
Associate's (two-year) degree  
Bachelor's (four-year) degree  
Master's degree  
Doctoral degree  
I don't know  
Does not apply

## Q11

**If applicable, what is the highest level of education your second parent or guardian attained?**

Grammar school  
Some high school  
High school degree  
Some college  
Associate's (two-year) degree  
Bachelor's (four-year) degree  
Master's degree  
Doctoral degree  
I don't know  
Does not apply

## Q12

**In what socioeconomic bracket were you raised?**

Lower class  
Lower middle class  
Middle class  
Upper middle class  
Upper class

## Q13

**How do you pay for tuition? (select all that apply)**

I pay  
One or both of my parents or guardians pay  
Other family members pay  
I receive a scholarship  
I receive student loans

## **Q16**

**Do you receive an allowance from your parent(s) or guardian(s)?**

Yes

No

*If “Yes” was selected, Q17 will appear.*

## **Q17**

**How much do you receive in a month, approximately?**

## **Q18**

**Do you receive disability or other public income support?**

Yes

No

*If “Yes” was selected, Q19 will appear.*

## **Q19**

**How much do you receive in a month, approximately?**

## **Q20**

**Do you work one or more steady jobs during the school year?**

Yes

No

*If “Yes” is selected, Q21 will appear.*

## **Q21**

**How much do you earn in a month, approximately?**

## **Q22**

**Do you work one or more steady jobs during the summer or winter breaks?**

- Yes
- No

*If “Yes” is selected, Q23 will appear.*

## **Q23**

**How much do you earn in a month, approximately?**

## **Q24**

**How many pairs of TOMS do you own?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- more than 4

## **Q25**

**How did you acquire your first pair of TOMS?**

- I purchased them
- They were a gift
- They were a hand-me-down

*If in Q24 answers 2, 3, 4, or more than 4 are selected, Q26 will appear.*

## **Q26**

**How did you acquire your second pair of TOMS?**

I purchased them  
They were a gift  
They were a hand-me-down

*If in Q24 answers 3, 4, or more than 4 were selected, Q27 will appear.*

## **Q27**

**How did you acquire your third pair of TOMS?**

I purchased them  
They were a gift  
They were a hand-me-down

*If in Q24 answers 4 or more than 4 were selected, Q28 will appear.*

## **Q28**

**How did you acquire your fourth pair of TOMS?**

I purchased them  
They were a gift  
They were a hand-me-down

*If in Q24 answer 4 or more was selected, Q29 will appear.*

## **Q29**

**How did you acquire your fifth, sixth, seventh, etc. pair of TOMS? (can select more than one answer)**

I purchased them  
They were a gift  
They were a hand-me-down

## **Q40**

**Do you find that TOMS produces attractive shoes?**

Yes  
No

## **Q72**

**What factor do you like most about TOMS?**

- Cause (TOMS' mission)
- Comfort
- Attractiveness/style
- Other

## **Q73**

**If Other, what factor do you like most?**

## **Q70**

**What factor played the largest role in your decision to purchase a pair of TOMS?**

- Cause (TOMS' mission)
- Comfort
- Attractiveness/style
- Previous pair wore out
- Other

## **Q71**

**If Other, what factor made your decision?**

## **Q31**

**How did you first learn about TOMS? (select all applicable answers)**

- Friend/peer
- Family member
- TOMS website
- Social networking website (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Print media (newspaper, magazine, etc.)
- Other

*If "Other" is selected, Q32 will appear.*

## Q32

If Other, where?

## Q33

How long after learning about TOMS did you buy or acquire a pair?

- Within one week
- Within one month
- Within six months
- Within twelve months
- At twelve months or later

## Q34

If you bought at least one pair of TOMS, how much money did you spend on your TOMS, on average? (i.e. if you bought two pairs, please AVERAGE - do not just add together - the prices.)

- Less than \$50
- Between \$50-\$60
- Between \$60-\$70
- Between \$70-\$80
- More than \$80
- Not applicable (I did not buy my pair(s))

*If Questions 25-29 were answered with "I purchased them," Q35 will appear.*

## Q35

There are many purposes behind the gifting of TOMS to children in developing nations. One is to prevent foot deformities and disabilities like a debilitating disease known as podocoinosis, which causes mass inflammation of the feet and toes. The other is related to education. In many nations, children need a full school uniform to attend school. The gifting of shoes allows these children to achieve an education.

When you bought your TOMS, were you aware of these causes (health and/or education)?

- I was aware of both causes
- I was aware of neither cause
- I was aware of the disease prevention but not the education promotion cause
- I was aware of the education promotion but not the disease prevention cause



*If Question 35 was answered with A, C, or D, Q36 will appear.*

## **Q36**

**Did your awareness of this (these) cause(s) factor in your decision to purchase a pair?**

- Not at all
- Not much
- Neutral
- A little bit
- Definitely yes

*If Questions 25-29 were answered with "I purchased them," Q37 will appear.*

## **Q37**

**Would you have still bought TOMS if shoes were given to children in America instead of children abroad?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

## **Q38**

**Would you be more likely to buy TOMS if shoes were given to children in America instead of children abroad?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- It wouldn't impact my decision one way or the other (neutral)

## **Q42**

**Have you received peer feedback about your TOMS?**

- Yes
- No

*If "Yes" is selected, Q43-46 will appear.*

## **Q43**

**Has feedback been mainly positive, negative or neutral?**

Positive  
Negative  
Neutral

## **Q44**

**Has feedback been about... (select all that apply)**

Attractiveness  
Causes TOMS supports  
Wear and tear  
Price  
Other

## **Q45**

**Has feedback influenced your decision to purchase another pair of TOMS?**

Yes  
No

## **Q46**

**Has feedback affected your decision to recommend TOMS to others?**

Yes  
No

## **Q47**

**Have you recommended TOMS to others?**

Yes  
No

*If "Yes" is selected, Q48-49 will appear. If "No" is selected, Q50 will appear.*

## **Q48**

**Who?**

## **Q49**

**Why?**

## **Q50**

**Why not?**

## **Q51**

**Did you attend the JMU senior convocation speech in May 2010 with speaker and TOMS founder Blake Mycoskie?**

Yes

No

*If “Yes” is selected, Q52 will appear.*

## **Q52**

**Did this factor in your decision to purchase a pair of TOMS?**

Not at all

Not much

Neutral

A little bit

Definitely yes

## **Q53**

**Did TOMS’ marketing, through the website, web advertisements, print advertisements or social media websites influence your decision to purchase or acquire a pair of TOMS?**

Not at all

Not much

Neutral

A little bit

Definitely yes

## Q54

**Have you ever participated in TOMS' One Day Without Shoes?**

- Yes
- No

*If Q25-29 were answered with "I purchased them," Q55 will appear.*

## Q55

**In the one-for-one business model, one item is given to an individual in need for every consumer item purchased. TOMS employs this model by providing one child a pair of shoes for every pair bought by a consumer.**

**Did the one-for-one model factor in your decision to purchase a pair of TOMS?**

- Yes
- No

## Q56

**In the one-for-one business model, one item is given to an individual in need for every consumer item purchased. TOMS employs this model by providing one child a pair of shoes for every pair bought by a consumer.**

**Have you ever supported the one-for-one model through other companies or charities, or other products?**

- Yes
- No

*If "Yes" is selected, Q57 will appear.*

## Q57

What other product(s) did you buy and what cause(s) did you support?

## Q59

Charitable consumerism is defined in two ways: the act of buying a product to support a cause OR monetarily supporting a cause with the expectation of receiving a tangible reward. An example of the former is going to a coffee shop and buying a mug where proceeds of that sale go to a cause. An example of the latter is sending a monetary donation to an organization that promotes a “free” item in return. Both of these fall into the definition of charitable consumerism.

How often do you participate in charitable consumerism?

- Never
- Less than Once a Month
- Once a Month
- 2-3 Times a Month
- Once a Week
- 2-3 Times a Week
- Daily

*If anything but “Never” was chosen, Q61 will appear.*

## Q61

What organization(s) or cause(s) have you traditionally supported and what product(s) have you received?

## Q63

How often do you participate in charitable or philanthropic giving in which you do not benefit (giving just for the sake of giving)?

- Never
- Less than Once a Month
- Once a Month
- 2-3 Times a Month
- Once a Week
- 2-3 Times a Week

Daily

*If anything but “Never” was chosen, Q64 will appear.*

## **Q64**

**What organizations or causes do you support?**

## **Q65**

**Are you more likely to use your consumer dollars to benefit domestic or international causes?**

Domestic  
International

## **Q66**

**Do you volunteer (give your time without expectation of monetary benefit)?**

Yes  
No

*If “Yes” was selected, Q67-69 will appear.*

## **Q67**

**For how many years have you volunteered?**

## **Q68**

**How many hours a week do you volunteer, approximately?**

## **Q69**

**Where do you (or have you) volunteer(ed) and what kind of volunteer work do you do?**

## Q70

**Do you support your community by buying locally? (for example, by attending a Farmer's Market)**

- Yes
- No

## Q71

**Below is a list of ten societal issues. Please rank them from 1-10, 1 being the cause you are most likely to support through money or volunteer time, 10 being the cause you are least likely to support through money or volunteer time.**

- 1 Economic development
- 2 Health and disease
- 3 Hunger
- 4 Education
- 5 Access to clean water
- 6 Disaster relief
- 7 Environment
- 8 Homelessness
- 9 Anti-crime/violence prevention
- 10 Equal rights/diversity

## Q72

**Please rank the following situations from 1-4, 1 being the situation you are most likely to support, 4 being the situation you are least likely to support.**

- 1 Buying a product where a portion of the proceeds to go a cause
- 2 Buying a product, aware that the same product is going to an individual in need (the one-for-one model)
- 3 Donating money to a cause without expectation of a return (charitable giving)
- 4 Supporting a cause monetarily and receiving a “free” gift in return

## Q73

**Say you're in a coffee shop and see that the purchase of a coffee mug leads to a 10% donation of its retail price to a charity. Please rank the likelihood of your purchase, given the following conditions:**

- 1 It's an attractive mug and supports your #1 cause
- 2 It's an attractive mug and it supports your least-favorite cause
- 3 It's an unattractive mug and supports your #1 cause
- 4 It's an unattractive mug and supports your least-favorite cause

## Q74

**Thank you for taking the time to answer this survey. Please enter your name and JMU email address below if you would like to be entered in a drawing to win a pair of Classic TOMS.**