

An interview with Lindsay Carron, co-founder of the social enterprise Board Well & Pepperdine alumnus

This past week I met with Lindsay Carron, a 2011 graduate of Seaver College, who completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Studio Art. She has been profiled in the undergraduate non-profit series, and spoke recently about founding Board Well. Current undergraduate Pepperdine students who attended the talk were also able to create an artistic board after her lecture, using paints and creative designs of their own. Lindsay also recently volunteered for Art Miles in San Diego, an organization that completes beautiful murals worldwide, to bridge cultural gaps and to heal. She was able to complete a mural for Dr. Rashad Zaydan who runs medical clinics in Iraq and founded the organization Knowledge for Iraqi Women Society. Lindsay was able to present the mural to Dr. Rashad Zaydan in San Diego recently, during a reception to honor her winning the Woman Peacekeeper Award.

Lindsay and Courtney Branch founded Board Well as a way to be able to financially support some of their favorite non-profits, one of them being Wishing Well, which works to provide clean water to remote areas and impoverished people. Lindsay and Courtney design wooden surfboard art and also paint customized personal surfboards. A portion of the proceeds from the sales is then given to the non-profits that Board Well supports.

BOARD WELL'S MISSION:

To use art as a platform for change.

Board Well partners with influential non-profits to create sustainable change. With every custom art board purchased, proceeds are donated to organizations, such as Wishing Well, improving lives throughout the world. We help you help them.

BOARD WELL'S VISION:

We believe the artwork we create should not only be visually enticing, but also serve a greater purpose. Creating is an outlet for physical and mental release, just as surfing, skateboarding, and snowboarding. We invite you to breathe deeper, see clearer, and release fully, knowing that the board you are riding is helping another.

BOARD WELL MOTTO:

LIVE WELL. CARE WELL. BOARDWELL.

BOARD WELL'S CORE VALUES:

1. Artistic Ingenuity
2. Rebellious Determination
3. Clarity of Mind

The following is my interview with Lindsay Carron, co-founder of Board Well.

How did you derive at the name, “Board Well” for your social enterprise?

Before we even named it, we partnered with the non-profit [Wishing Well](#), run by Courtney’s cousin, who helped us with the setup of Board Well. Using the word “well” has different connotations. There is “well,” as in the adjective, and “well” the actual physical object “well.” If you are doing something because you have a purpose, you are doing it well. So we put it together through this brainstorming process, and our motto became: “Live Well... Care Well... Board Well.”

What inspired you to start Board Well & what is Board Well’s purpose?

Courtney and I started to do art together after graduation from Pepperdine, and I invited her to participate in multiple art crawls where we started talking about doing collaborative art projects. The whole non-profit aspect came about because we both have a passion to give back. The feedback we received at art crawls and online was immensely positive, so we continued to respond.

We used Tom’s Shoes as a model for fusion of a for-profit and non-profit, but without having our own separate non-profit entity. I learned from my experiences running an art club at Pepperdine to support the existing non-profits that are out there already and who need help, instead of creating a new one. We learned how to paint actual surfboards, using elements of what worked and what wouldn’t when put into salt water, from pro surfers who advised us on paints and sealants. We also create a decorative version of the surfboard, hand-cutting the wood and painting each with creative designs that reflect social issues.

Which non-profits do you currently support with the sale of the boards?

We started out supporting Wishing Well, and then expanded to other non-profits. We did a board for the microfinance team at Pepperdine, which helped to support a South American documentary that the students were making. The board design was inspired by the great successes of the microfinance organization Kiva. It was a great way to connect with them. Courtney and I both have different non-profits that we are passionate about. I am inspired by [Creative Visions Foundation](#), located in Malibu, which supports artists and their activist endeavors. That partnership will come into line in the future. We are also passionate about [Falling Whistles](#) that helps with peace in the Congo. We will concentrate on these for now, and then eventually support a series of rotated and featured non-profit organizations. Once we start making more money, the cycle will flow better, and it is a gradual climb with any learning process. Most businesses have donors and capital to start with, yet we started from scratch and are developing it as we go. We recently started a [Kickstarter](#) campaign, to help us be able to implement the full Board Well plan with additional funding. The donors receive various types of rewards for donations on KickStarter. It is a good way to obtain random donations and one-time donations. We are currently on day 5 of our 30 day campaign, trying to raise \$5000 by December 15th. If you don’t raise your full target amount within the 30 days, you don’t receive any of the money. It’s an all or nothing deal. If successful, we plan on

putting the money raised towards purchasing new boards and permanent screens for screen printing which will make the process much easier and quicker than hand painting each board.

Where do your designs for the boards come from?

The designs come from the non-profits we support: we have two designs for each nonprofit. The non-profit boards are set designs created with screens and then customized. We also have a limited edition series that comes out every two months, only available during this time. Currently, we have the water series, the non-profit partner board series, an animal series, and the succulent series.

How did you setup your social enterprise and what is the structure you chose?

We are not a non-profit, as we wanted to support other non-profits, so we plan to set up Board Well as a “LLC (limited liability corporation).” My roommate assisted us in the legal decision-making, being a paralegal, as an LLC provided us the best option regarding taxes and liability.

What are your plans for the future?

We will be presenting at more art crawls, music venues, and reaching out to surf shops with our designs. We also plan to participate in Pepperdine’s non-profit consulting undergraduate program.

Are you looking for volunteers, and how would someone contact you?

Eventually, we would like to hire people to help with the projects. We are looking for volunteers to help with various things, such as the mailing and wrapping of the boards, or in getting their friends together to help support Board Well also. We can be contacted at: boardwelldesigns@gmail.com.

Be sure to check out Board Well’s website and find them on social media here:

Board Well’s Website: www.boardwell.org

Board Well’s Kickstarter Project where you can help them achieve their \$5,000 in 30 days goal:

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1026775992/activated-by-art-a-new-series-by-board-well?ref=city>

Board Well on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/176130852462483/>

Lindsay Carron’s Website:

<http://lindsaycarron.com/custom-boards-by-lindsay-and-courtney/>

Courtney Branch & Lindsay Carron-Founders of Board Well



Microfinance Board:



Elephant-Animal Series Board:



Big Fish Board:



Pepperdine students making their own boards during Pepperdine's Non-profit Series Lecture given by Lindsay & Courtney of Board Well:





Lindsay Carron with Dr. Zaydan & the mural she made in recognition of Dr. Zaydan's work in Iraq:

