



NEW MOUNTAIN  
VENTURES

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# ***LIFE ENTREPRENEURS:*** ***Ordinary People Creating Extraordinary Lives*** **Christopher Gergen and Gregg Vanourek**

***“One of the most inspiring and unique books  
I have come across in a long time.”***

--Warren Bennis, best-selling author, *On Becoming a Leader*



### ***LIFE ENTREPRENEURS: Ordinary People Creating Extraordinary***

***Lives*** provides stories and strategies for integrating life, work, and purpose. Drawing on interviews with 55 enduringly successful leaders and entrepreneurs, the book is designed to help people turn ordinary lives into extraordinary ones by embracing the entrepreneurial mindset. By applying entrepreneurial principles and practices—ownership, opportunity recognition, vision, innovation, risk, resourcefulness—to all of our endeavors, we can lead lives of purpose, service, and significance. “Life entrepreneurs” leverage their relationships, strengths, passions, and values in their work, life, and personal and community engagements, dramatically boosting their quality of life and enhancing their broader community contributions. ***Life Entrepreneurs*** provides a compelling road map to success for emerging leaders, budding entrepreneurs, students, career changers, and those contemplating big changes in their life and work.

Today, people are increasingly rejecting past approaches to stable careers and lives constructed around safety, security, and status. Rather, they are building their lives around purpose, connection, and impact using a distinctively entrepreneurial mindset. Entrepreneurs interviewed include the founding visionaries and entrepreneurial leaders behind Starbucks, Clif Bar, Chipotle, Cranium, Honest Tea, RealNetworks, Hanna Andersson, Share Our Strength, Build.org, and the KIPP schools. Additional interviews include a former governor, two mayors, a social entrepreneur turned rancher, a yoga instructor, a baker, a minister, a four-star general, and more.

This nationally acclaimed book is accompanied by a (free) Personal Assessment, comprehensive Entrepreneurial Life Planning exercises (also free), a blog, and more; and it has been reviewed or otherwise featured in the *New York Times*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Business Week*, *Washington Post*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, and other media outlets. Authors Gergen and Vanourek write regular columns and blogs for *Harvard Business Online*, *Inc.com*, and *The Washington Times*.

For more information please visit [www.lifeentrepreneurs.com](http://www.lifeentrepreneurs.com).

***LIFE ENTREPRENEURS:***

***Ordinary People Creating Extraordinary Lives***

Christopher Gergen and Gregg Vanourek

Jossey-Bass, 978-0-7879-8862-3

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March 14, 2008

*“Some people don’t just live: they lead a life. They don’t sit around waiting for a lucky break. They create opportunities. They go after their dreams and bring them to life.... They develop a vision of the good life, devise a plan for how to attain it, go for it, and check their progress along the way. As with any great effort, their work is never done but ever-evolving and, often, inspiring to those around them. Welcome to the territory of life entrepreneurs.”* --excerpt from *Life Entrepreneurs*, Chapter 1

The authors are available for interviews. For more information about *Life Entrepreneurs: Ordinary People Creating Extraordinary Lives* or the authors, please contact Kristianna Berger at 303.482.5303 or [kberger@lifeentrepreneurs.com](mailto:kberger@lifeentrepreneurs.com).

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## Praise for *Life Entrepreneurs*

“One of the most inspiring and unique books I have come across in a long time.”

--Warren Bennis, best-selling author, *On Becoming a Leader*

“Pick up this book and read it. It might change your life.”

--Stephen R. Covey, author, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

“Captures the essential qualities of leadership.... I highly recommend it.”

--Howard Schultz, chairman & CEO, Starbucks Coffee Company

“Provocative reading.... an intriguing, challenging guide for the next generation of leaders.”

--Wendy Kopp, president and founder, Teach for America

“Belongs on the nightstand of every thoughtful businessperson in America.”

--Daniel H. Pink, best-selling author, *A Whole New Mind*

“I highly recommend the book to anyone who is seeking The Good Life.”

--James O’Toole, author, *Creating the Good Life*

“A powerful guide to integrating life, work, purpose, and work-life balance... A great gift.”

--Frances Hesselbein, chairman, Leader to Leader Institute

“Buy this book, read it, and then do it!”

--Alan M. Webber, co-founding editor, *Fast Company* magazine

“The real question is not how to just make a living, but how to make a life. *Life Entrepreneurs* helps all who are struggling ... to do just that.”

--Dr. Mark S. Albion, best-selling author, *Making a Life, Making a Living*®

“Captures the essence of the Creative Age where people are the true source of economic growth.”

--Richard Florida, best-selling author, *Rise of the Creative Class*

“*Life Entrepreneurs* address(es) the central issue of every emerging leader, ‘How can I design my life to be both fulfilling and significant?’”

--Bill George, author, *True North* and former chairman and CEO, Medtronic

“Our work and life can be a great adventure, an opportunity serve people in compelling and meaningful ways. In this book, we gain powerful insights on how to realize those important possibilities.”

--Linda Mason, chairman and co-founder, Bright Horizons Family Solutions

## About the Authors

Gergen and Vanourek are dynamic, successful entrepreneurs and authors with more than 20 start-ups under their belt that have yielded more than \$100M in annualized revenue and affected thousands of lives. With the book and its accompanying blog, author-led workshops and webinars, speaking engagements, teaching, radio and television interviews, and guest articles and commentaries, the authors provide a range of fresh thinking and thought leadership on business and social entrepreneurship, leadership, education reform and entrepreneurship, high-performance work cultures, and personal and professional excellence.

**Christopher Gergen** is a founding partner of New Mountain Ventures and a visiting lecturer and Director of the Entrepreneurial Leadership Initiative at Duke University within the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy's Hart Leadership Program. He is the co-founder and chairman of SMARTHINKING—the leading online tutoring company in the country serving over 200,000 students. Other entrepreneurial ventures include starting a coffeehouse/bar dedicated to promoting the arts and music in Santiago, Chile and helping to launch the “Entrepreneur Corps.” Previously, Christopher started LEAD!, and is a founding board member of the E.L. Haynes Public Charter School also in D.C.

Further professional experience includes serving as Vice President of New Market Development for K12 Inc. and Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Business Development and Strategy for New American Schools. Christopher received a Bachelor of Arts with honors from Duke University, a Master's Degree in Public Policy from the George Washington University, and his M.B.A. from Georgetown University. He lives with his wife and two children in Washington, D.C.

When he's not at work, Christopher can be found competing in triathlons, traveling the world (including past adventures creating literacy programs in South Africa, teaching on a sheep-farm in New Zealand, and hitching a ride on a Chilean naval vessel), oil painting, and hiking through Rock Creek Park with his family including Mango the Big Dog.

**Gregg Vanourek** is a Founding Partner of New Mountain Ventures. Previously, Gregg founded and ran Vanourek Consulting Solutions, served as Senior Vice President of School Development for K12 Inc. (NYSE: LRN), Vice President for Programs at the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, and Research Fellow at the Hudson Institute.

Gregg has co-authored a book on charter schools, several national research reports and book chapters, and dozens of articles for leading newspapers across the country. Gregg holds an M.B.A. from the Yale School of Management, an M.Sc. from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a B.A. from Claremont McKenna College (magna cum laude). He serves on the Board of the Vail Leadership Institute and teaches at Denver University and Colorado Mountain College. Gregg lives with his wife and daughters in Colorado.

When he's not at work, Gregg can be found playing guitar in jam sessions, songwriting, enjoying the wonders of Colorado, writing a book with his father, and exploring the wonders of Scandinavia with his wife's Swedish family.

## About New Mountain Ventures

The authors of *Life Entrepreneurs* are also the founding partners of **New Mountain Ventures**, a national leadership development company that works with individuals and teams to achieve personal and professional excellence. NMV offers dynamic workshops, retreats, webinars, coaching, and consulting on life entrepreneurship, leadership development, high-performance cultures, and personal and professional excellence. Its programs address both personal and professional leadership—and the nexus between them.

The company works with education institutions, companies, non-profits, foundations, and individuals. Participants in NMV's programs are exposed to and trained in the art of entrepreneurial leadership and life entrepreneurship. Each of our engagements is customized and focused on producing measurable results and high performance—as well as creating an electric attitude of what is possible.

Please visit [www.newmountainventures.com](http://www.newmountainventures.com) for more information.

## About Life Entrepreneurship

***Life entrepreneurship: creating a life of significance through opportunity recognition, innovation, and action.***

Entrepreneurship is a defining feature of our time, with some observers calling this the “entrepreneurial age.” But our thinking about entrepreneurship is now obsolete.

We typically think about entrepreneurship solely in the *business* context (version 1.0 of entrepreneurship). In recent years, the phenomenon of *social entrepreneurship* (version 2.0) exploded onto the scene, becoming a beloved value of rising generations and a primary driver of the political change now sweeping the nation.

Today, there is a new phenomenon emerging with implications equally large: *life entrepreneurship* (version 3.0 of entrepreneurship). With life entrepreneurship, people aren't merely embracing the entrepreneurial principles of opportunity recognition, innovation, risk, and ownership for dynamic enterprise creation or social transformation; rather, they are integrating these principles into their entire lives.

In their new book, ***Life Entrepreneurs: Ordinary People Creating Extraordinary Lives*** (Jossey-Bass, 2008), successful thirty-something entrepreneurs Gergen and Vanourek name this movement and document how growing numbers of people are applying the principles of entrepreneurship to life itself. Today, people are increasingly rejecting past approaches to stable careers and lives constructed around safety, security, and status. Rather they are building their lives around purpose, connection, and impact using a distinctively entrepreneurial mindset. This phenomenon is being embraced by new generations of leaders (especially Gen X and Gen Y), and the emergence of life entrepreneurship has significant implications for our communities, learning institutions, and workplaces—as well as our very lives.

Drawing from interviews with fifty-five leading entrepreneurs worldwide as well as from the wisdom of multiple thought leaders, *Life Entrepreneurs* provides practical strategies for integrating life, work, and purpose, including vivid examples, moving vignettes, and concrete frameworks for revving up our work and play through entrepreneurial leadership.

Entrepreneurs interviewed include Howard Schultz (chairman, Starbucks), Cory Booker (Mayor of Newark), Linda Mason (chairman and co-founder, Bright Horizons Family Solutions), Steve Eells (founder, chairman, and CEO, Chipotle), Bill George (best-selling author and former CEO, Medtronic), Billy Shore (founder and Executive Director, Share Our Strength), Richard Tait (founder and CEO, Cranium), Mark Warner (technology entrepreneur and former Governor of Virginia), Rob Glaser (founder of RealNetworks), and Gary Erickson (founder and owner, Clif Bar). Additional interviews include a social entrepreneur turned rancher, a yoga instructor, a baker, a minister, a four-star general, and more.

Being a life entrepreneur is about developing an authentic, personal vision for life and then going for it. “It’s about awakening to the opportunities around us and setting audacious goals. It’s about taking action and making a difference. It’s about taking time out for reflection so we can renew ourselves for the road ahead. It’s not just *living* life, but *leading* life,” said Gergen and Vanourek.

Not only does *Life Entrepreneurs* act as an inspiring rallying cry for people who are seeking a better path, but it also offers a provocative portrayal of the impact this entrepreneurial mindset is having upon our workplaces, learning institutions, communities, and families.

## Selected Interviewees from the Book

Interviews for *Life Entrepreneurs* were conducted with 55 leading business, social, and life entrepreneurs worldwide:

1. Eric Adler, SEED Foundation
2. Karen Albrechtsen, Betty's Wok & Noodle Diner
3. Cory Booker, Mayor of Newark, NJ
4. Stacey Boyd, Savvy Source for Parents
5. Warren Brown, Cake Love
6. David Carmel, Jumpstart for Young Children
7. Kevin Carroll, author and motivational speaker
8. Jack Chain, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Strategic Air Command, retired
9. Gerald Chertavian, Year Up
10. Chip Conley, Joie de Vivre Hotels
11. Mary Cutrufello, songwriter, singer, and recording artist
12. Gun Denhart, Hanna Andersson
13. Robert Egger, D.C. Central Kitchen
14. Steve Ells, Chipotle
15. Gary Erickson, Clif Bar
16. Mike Feinberg, KIPP Schools
17. Michael Galgon, aQuantive
18. Bill George, Medtronic
19. Penny George, Bravewell Collaborative
20. Rob Glaser, RealNetworks
21. Seth Goldman, Honest Tea
22. Bridget Bradley Gray, Wiggle Room
23. David Gray, New America Foundation
24. John Hickenlooper, Mayor of Denver, CO
25. John Horan-Kates, Vail Leadership Institute
26. Max Israel, Customerville
27. Jael Kampfe, Lazy E-L Ranch, Four Times Foundation
28. Emmet B. Keeffe III, iRise
29. Peter Kellner, Endeavor Global
30. Natalie Killassy, Stitch Wise, South Africa
31. Suzanne Klahr, Build.org
32. Randy Komisar, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers
33. Larry Leith, Tokyo Joe's
34. David Levin, KIPP Schools
35. Richard Leider, Inventure Group
36. Paul Lightfoot, Foodline
37. Linda Mason, Bright Horizons Family Solutions
38. Simi Mir, Katona & Mir
39. Paul Nasrani, Adirondack Creamery
40. Will Pearson, Mental Floss
41. Jared Polis, Blue Mountain Arts.com, ProFlowers.com
42. Steve Quisenberry, 105 Meridian, Mountainsmith
43. Inez Russell, Friends for Life
44. Howard Schultz, Starbucks
45. Buie Seawell, University of Denver
46. Anita Sharpe, MOTTO
47. Murem Sharpe, Evoca LLC
48. Billy Shore, Share Our Strength
49. Kim Smith, NewSchools Venture Fund
50. Richard Tait, Cranium
51. Leila Velez, Beleza Natural, Brazil
52. Rajiv Vinnakota, SEED Foundation
53. Mark Warner, former governor of Virginia
54. Karin Weber, Merrill Lynch, author
55. Kimberly Wilson, Tranquil Space

## Topics for Discussion with Gergen and Vanourek, Authors of *Life Entrepreneurs*

- Entrepreneurship (Business Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurship, Life Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, the Myths and Pitfalls of Entrepreneurship, etc.)
- The Nexus between Personal and Professional Leadership (leading our lives and leading at work)
- The Implications of Today's Entrepreneurial Age for Our Communities, Schools, Universities, and Workplaces
- The Prevalence of Entrepreneurial Start-Ups in Recessions
- Work/Life Balance ("Integration")
- Generational Shifts (especially Gen X and the Millennials)
- Career Development
- Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention
- Risk-Taking
- National/Community Service
- Education Reform
- Leadership/Entrepreneurial Leadership
- Organizational Culture

## Recent Columns, Blogs, and Articles Written by the Authors

- ["From Corner Office to Classroom,"](#) *Washington Times*, October 22, 2008.
- ["Raising Courageous Women,"](#) *Washington Times*, October 8, 2008.
- ["The Value of Failure,"](#) *Harvard Business Publishing*, October 2, 2008.
- ["Yoga Cultivates Community,"](#) *Washington Times*, September 24, 2008.
- ["Classic Mistakes, Part 3: Opportunity Recognition,"](#) *Start-Up Blog (Inc.com)*, September 10, 2008.
- ["Bold School Reform Missing,"](#) *Washington Times*, September 10, 2008.
- ["Classic Mistakes, Part 2: Ignoring Your Company's Culture,"](#) *Start-Up Blog (Inc.com)*, September 3, 2008.
- ["Classic Mistakes, Part 1: The Over-the-Top Entrepreneur,"](#) *Start-Up Blog (Inc.com)*, August 29, 2008.
- ["Lives of Adventure, Fulfillment, and Service,"](#) *Provocations* (The Trinity Forum), August 28, 2008.
- ["Newman's Own Way of Giving,"](#) *Washington Times*, August 27, 2008.
- ["Why Entrepreneurs Love a Downturn,"](#) *Harvard Business Publishing*, August 26, 2008.
- ["What's Your Vision of the Good Life?"](#) *Harvard Business Publishing*, August 18, 2008.
- ["Vision\(ary\) Entrepreneur,"](#) *Harvard Business Publishing*, August 14, 2008.
- ["Go find your red rubber ball,"](#) *Washington Times*, August 13, 2008.
- ["Making the Impossible Possible,"](#) *Washington Times*, July 30, 2008.
- ["Zappos Culture Sows Spirit,"](#) *Washington Times*, July 16, 2008.
- ["Franklin: Social Entrepreneur,"](#) *Washington Times*, July 2, 2008.
- ["Leading and Living, Colorado-Style,"](#) *ColoradoBiz*, July 1, 2008.
- ["How to Become a 'Life Entrepreneur',"](#) *HR Specialist*, June 16, 2008.
- ["Making Good on a Promise,"](#) *Washington Times*, June 7, 2008.
- ["The Positive Network Effect,"](#) *Creations* magazine, June/July 2008.
- ["More Than Licking Envelopes,"](#) *Washington Times*, June 7, 2008.

Gergen and Vanourek are also the co-authors of a chapter titled "Talent Development: Looking Outside the Education Sector" for the recently released book, *The Future of Educational Entrepreneurship* (Harvard Education Press).