

# Ordinary People: Extraordinary Impact

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JOHN WALLACE OF JW FLOORS AND OUTREACH FOR HUMANITY

BY

RICK GREGORY

Since 2008, he's organized and catalyzed efforts that have resulted in nearly \$500,000 contributed to needy organizations and individuals; good Samaritans engaged through his non-profit have donated more than 12,000 volunteer service hours. Today, more than 200 employees derive their living through his companies, which include JW Floorcovering, ReSource Floors, ReSource Lights and JW Cleaning and Restoration.

As you explore the website for [JW Floors](#), owned and managed by John Wallace, you'll find the tagline, "Service with Purpose." Mission and Vision statements from his other companies (which you can access from the [jwfloors.com](#) main page) stack up along the same lines. They care. A commercial flooring contractor licensed in California, Nevada and Utah, Wallace and the crew he's assembled in up to 10 locations thrive by making that tagline a reality in not just their businesses, but in their personal lives as well.

For those of you whose egos demand that you measure yourselves against every other player in your industry, here are a few JW countables:

- Started solo from the back of a pickup in 1981
- Employs over 200 today
- Operates the largest full-service flooring company in San Diego County
- Owns a 22,000 sq. ft. headquarters in San Diego
- Manages facilities in California: San Diego, Escondido, Temecula, Gilroy, Stockton, Hayward
- Manages facilities in Utah: St. George, Murray (Salt Lake)
- Manages facilities in Nevada: Las Vegas (of course)
- Recycles more carpet waste than any other contractor in California
- Received multiple business awards, including a 2008 San Diego Better Business Bureau Torch Award for marketplace ethics and proudly displays the BBB A+ Rating for JW Floors
- Founded and contributes significantly to Outreach for Humanity, a California 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization.

From the very beginning, Wallace's focus has been on customer service rather than on quantity. The company Mission statement is to "exceed our customer's needs by providing diverse high quality services for their home and work environments." Clearly, those values along with hard work and wise leadership have led the JW companies to flourish, regardless of the economy.

What initially inspired Wallace to a different level in his "giving back to the community," was a 2007 mission trip to Mozambique, where he confronted poverty and suffering at a level

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he'd never seen or experienced before. After his return to San Diego, Wallace fueled the inspiration to create a charity outreach committee operating within his companies. People responded and this outreach committee began providing donations to both individuals and organizations in need.

But the filter through which Wallace viewed life was forever changed; as their little outreach committee saw contributions increase, they were stunned to watch the scope of need surrounding them increase as well. However, it wasn't that there truly was more need - it was that now their eyes had been opened to see the need. Recognizing the potential for greater impact, and obedient to a visionary call, the outreach charity committee morphed into Outreach for Humanity, a formal non-profit corporation.

On May 22, 2008, Outreach for Humanity hosted an open house presided over by former San Diego Mayor and radio personality Roger Hedgecock. At this event, Wallace stated publicly that Outreach's mission was to "... compassionately serve those in need by providing financial support, time and talent in order to affect lives for the better." They committed to do so by donating a minimum of \$50,000 annually, in addition to providing human capital in the form of volunteer service. Outreach's first official contribution of \$5,000 was presented to Mr. Hedgecock as a gift to Homefront San Diego, a non-profit organization partnered with the San Diego Navy League, which provides assistance to military families. In keeping with its strong appreciation for the US military, Outreach contributions to Homefront San Diego have grown to over \$60,000!

One of the beautiful components of the JW companies (including Outreach for Humanity) is a focus on the environment, which incorporates a desire to leave the smallest environmental footprint possible. Consequently, in every floorcovering project, all removed flooring materials are recycled into new carpet pad, other flooring products or new carpet fibers.

Along with recycling all removed materials, Outreach looks to reduce waste by utilizing "slightly defective" or remnant carpets and carpet tiles that are contributed by carpet manufacturers for use in charitable projects. Some of those projects look like the one for Ryan, a US Marine who lost both of his legs serving his third tour of duty overseas. For Ryan's entire living space, Outreach furnished and installed all the resilient and carpet flooring - which was contributed by manufacturers - and installed by volunteers.

Another illustration of Outreach and Wallace's commanding presence in the marketplace is significant partnerships with major companies. Recently, Outreach received a \$15,000 grant, with which they completely remodeled Eric's home; Eric is the victim of a tragic accident that left him a paraplegic. With this Home Depot grant, Eric's house was outfitted with handicap ramps and a new bathroom to accommodate his needs and allow him to live safely and comfortably in his own home.

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These are but a handful of examples of how Wallace and Outreach have engaged with and contributed to the communities in which they live. But it doesn't end here . . . Financial contributions are only a part of Outreach's impact. Each year now, Outreach provides Thanksgiving meals through HeadStart and Military Outreach Ministry. Since 2008, over 600 Thanksgiving meals have been given.

One Outreach lineup includes what they call "backpack" projects, where so far they have filled over 1,000 backpacks with daily essentials for underserved students, as well as local homeless individuals. Another Outreach volunteer team creates hand-made baby items and collects stuffed animals. So far, over 3,000 stuffed toys have been given to Children's Hospital San Diego and nearly 4,000 baby blankets have been made and donated to the Rady Children's Hospital.

And then there's Mozambique. The town of Xia Xia, in the south of Mozambique, on the Indian Ocean coast, due west across the Mozambique Channel from Madagascar was where Wallace first got his inspiration for "giving back." Outreach has continued in its commitment to the people there, purchasing a farm, funding a borehole and tilapia fishery. In 2010, Wallace returned to Xia Xia in an effort to further encourage their sustainability and self-sufficiency, with tools and funding to provide on-the-job tile installation training for the locals.

Ordinary? John Wallace would tell you that he's nothing more than an ordinary guy who happened to be given some opportunities for doing good. People around him might argue that. Individuals like Ryan and Eric, who have been impacted by his vision and Outreach organization, would definitely dispute it. He may be ordinary, but John Wallace has clearly had an extraordinary impact in his own community - and the world!