

Philippe Houdard, Founder & President, Developing Minds Foundation. Age: 39

A decade ago, Philippe Houdard was an upstart exec with Lucent Technologies with dreams of rising to the top. Then he launched Developing Minds Foundation, and the “top” became the mountainous Colombian villages or Brazilian slums where Houdard educates the impoverished. Though they live in fear, his “students” nonetheless have a “spark in their eyes...a passion for reading.” Houdard knows the calling of his physician father and French cattleman grandfather—to “bring passion to my life and work”—is being fulfilled. Ten years from now, Houdard envisions different dreams. He hopes his organization can use “education to transform the lives of the abandoned, abused, forgotten and invisible who live in areas of extreme violence and poverty.” He’s discovering ways to weave his once-corporate and future philanthropic selves to “find deep gratification working in both the business and charitable worlds,” he says. “In fact, I find that the success of one depends heavily on the other.”

