

A LEGACY OF PHILANTHROPY



Daryle & Brenda Doden
AMBASSADOR ENTERPRISES



FOR DARYLE AND BRENDA DODEN, BUSINESS IS A PATH TO GIVING BACK TO OTHERS BY COMBINING THE COMPETITIVE ENERGY OF THE FREE MARKET WITH THE COMPASSIONATE IDEALS OF PHILANTHROPY.

"The goal of Ambassador Enterprises is to provide the social benefits of philanthropy while maintaining the competitive sharpness of for-profit business," says Daryle Doden, Founder/CEO of Ambassador Enterprises. "We can apply the energy of business through a legacy-minded private equity firm, then partner with others to deliver innovative solutions for greater public impact." His wife, Brenda Doden, says, "People need to know someone cared enough to give back so they can also enjoy the benefits that life and work offer. While it is nice to be appreciated, we are primarily just grateful that we can do it."

The journey for Daryle and Brenda began 56 years ago. In 1973, Daryle left his ministry roles and joined the business world with a \$100,000 loan and an understanding from mentors about what he needed to do to succeed. "As I grew in business success, we remained active in our faith. When we could, we offered support to others, financially and through advice and mentorship," Daryle says. "I knew anyone could write a check. I wanted to also offer my time, talent, and testimony to help others, as others had helped me."

As his business involvement grew and Daryle became the sole owner of Ambassador Steel, the Dodens recognized that "finding security leads to working for success. However, business and financial success alone was not fully satisfying. We wanted to add significance to our success." The Dodens increasingly realized that significance comes through relationships, and that "washing the feet" of another is much more rewarding than achieving some financial goal. The addition of significance came through the combination of business and philanthropy – the goal of Ambassador Enterprises, founded after the sale of Ambassador Steel. Ambassador Enterprises was designed as a private equity firm that invests its profits in others. Today, it comprises nearly 75 business units that operate independently and employ almost 5,000 people.

"Through our various businesses, we build relationships and serve others, something deeply rooted in our family backgrounds and experiences," Daryle says. "We invest in for-profit businesses in which we have specific expertise that can offer profitable returns. Then, we invest those profits in transformational activities designed to benefit people and add value to the communities we serve." Both Daryle and Brenda are actively invested in the success of the team. The Ambassador Enterprises workplace is one of trust and high standards, where dignity and respect are key—a high-trust, high-care, high-performance culture where team members "Honor God – Respect Others – Work Hard – Create Value."

"After I stopped teaching, I found that my gifts were hospitality and organizing others to achieve a common goal," Brenda says. "I enjoy being a listening ear and hearing what others have to say and the stories they tell. I call myself a 'rope-holder' for others, serving people to make their lives easier."

"We are close to our employees and strive to create a corporate culture of compassion and support. We not only know our team at work, but we also want to know their families," Daryle says. "Our workplaces and communities are where we protect and care for each other. Whether investing in the business or the community, we always focus on offering a sense of belonging and the investments that will benefit others now and into the future."

