

JEAN AND STEVE CASE
MCLEAN, VIRGINIA

From the early 1980s, we were both privileged to play a part in ushering in the Internet revolution. AOL was, in essence, a social enterprise. While we were focused on building a business, what really drove us was the mission of building a new medium that could empower individuals and become as ubiquitous as the television or telephone, but be even more valuable. We are proud of the success AOL achieved – and in awe of the profound impact the Internet has had globally.

Since launching the Case Foundation in 1997 we have sought to tap the power of the Internet, new technologies and entrepreneurial approaches to help strengthen the social sector. The Case Foundation has invested in hundreds of organizations, initiatives and partnerships in the U.S. and around the globe. Built on the principles of leadership, collaboration and entrepreneurship, we seek to inspire individuals to realize their potential to create change, while helping social institutions achieve sustainable scale and impact.

While the Case Foundation is our primary philanthropic vehicle, it is not our only avenue as we seek to make a difference. We have also made personal gifts to schools, churches and other organizations that support our local communities. Further, while our commitment to charitable giving is fundamental to our efforts to address societal challenges, we think it is important to note that we also believe – and back our words with dollars – that societal objectives can often also be met through the prism of entrepreneurial businesses.

While there is often a defined division between “for profit” and “not for profit” sectors – with for profit focused on making money and not for profit focused on making a difference – our experiences suggest that can be an overly simplistic way of looking at the world. Instead, we first focus on a societal problem or opportunity that needs to be addressed, and then decide the right strategy to achieve the greatest gains. Sometimes that is backing or starting a non-profit organization. Other times, that is backing or starting a business that is focused on doing well while doing good.

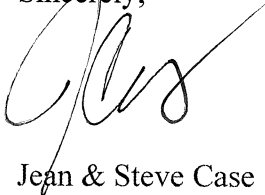
We want to use all the tools available to us, to have the greatest impact, and achieve the greatest good. Our missions for the Case Foundation and our investment firm Revolution are therefore identical: we invest in people and ideas that can change the world. We deploy our capital – and our time – to have the greatest possible impact. We are privileged to have this opportunity to give back in so many ways.

We share the view that those to whom much is given, much is expected. We realize we have been given a unique platform and opportunity, and we are committed to doing the best we can with it. We do not believe our assets are “ours” but rather we try to be the responsible stewards of these resources – and we recognize we have an obligation to reinvest them in a positive, constructive and flexible manner.

We are pleased to join The Giving Pledge and publicly reaffirm our commitment to give away the majority of our wealth to fund worthy charitable causes. We also look forward to working with the dozens of others who have made the Giving Pledge commitment to share lessons, perspectives and best practices. We have learned a lot over the years both through our philanthropic successes and our failures, and believe that by working together and exchanging lessons learned, the impact of the backers of the Giving Pledge can be enhanced. Our individual commitments are significant, but the power of our collective commitments can be greater than the sum of the parts. That is why we are joining with Bill, Melinda, Warren, and so many others to make this public commitment.

While we are proud to be part of this distinguished Giving Pledge group, in closing we also want to reaffirm our ongoing commitment to encouraging a citizen-centered approach to philanthropy, which is rooted in the belief that small gifts from many are just as powerful as large gifts from a few. We hope the Giving Pledge will inspire many others, and we stand ready to do whatever we can to share what we learn and shine a spotlight on the extraordinary commitments millions of people make each and every day.

Sincerely,



Jean & Steve Case

