MODERATOR: So the last conference I was at, they broke us up into small groups and they asked us to name somebody who we felt would likely their name would be remembered in 500 years. You heard Mohammed Ali, JFK, Nelson Mandela. And I said Scott Harrison, who is our next speaker.

Five years ago, I met Scott Harrison because he was the hottest night club promoter in New York. Scott was better than anyone at filling a dark room downtown with a bunch of models and a bunch of hedge fund guys and then selling $500 bottles vodka. Not an especially meaningful job (laughter).

Five years later, in 2009, Scott Harrison is going to bring fresh drinking water to 800,000 people in Sub Saharan, Africa. We've got a video just to set up Scott and then we'll bring him on stage.

(Video begins with music playing)

SPEAKER: We do use water in large quantities. You know, water is essential to life. Without water there is no life.

(Music playing)
(Commercial for Nissan)
(Commercial for hulu)
(Commercial for Geico)
(Commercial for Canon)

[Applause]

SCOTT HARRISON: That was the intro to top all intros. Big to live up.

I'd hope to take my nine minutes just to get you to think differently at water. Think about water as a luxury. I don't know if the slides are up. Twitter is our favorite form of communication. I'll tell you why a little bit later. That's where to find us.

As Scott said, this was my life ten years. 18 years old, came to the city, pretension jerk. I'm holding up my Rolex in the photo so that they can see I'm wearing a Rolex at some club in 4:00 in the morning. I got paid $2,000 a month to drink that bottle by Bacardi, another $2,000 by Bud as an influencer. At 28 years old, I was on a perfect vacation in (indiscernible), servants and horses with guides, in private planes playing $10,000 hands of baccarat. I came face-to-face with what a miserable, selfish, arrogant person I was.

I had a faith conversion, came back to my Christian faith as a kid, and decided to leave New York City and do a 180. I radically changed my life to dedicate to the poor. That took me to Liberia. So from New York City to the poorest country in Africa, I volunteered as a photographer on a hospital ship with 350 other volunteers. I started taking pictures in this country
that had no electricity, no running water, no sewage and no mail. This is how people were living, 800 to an apartment building.

What we did on the ship is we would operate for free on people with huge tumors, flesh-eating disease, reconstructions. We would operate on cleft lips and cleft palates. Before the ship sailed, we'd put these signs up and say if you have got one of these conditions, come and we'll see if we can help you. And 7,000 people would come for 1,500 surgery slots. We would have to turn away most of the people.

The first child I photographed, 14-year-old Alfred, suffocating to death in his own face in a country with two surgeons and one doctor for 50,000 people. Here we've got a doctor for 180 people. Alfred's surgery a couple of days later because some surgeons had given up their vacation time and operated for free. And then I got to take him home with a new face and a new life a few weeks later. That left such a remarkable impression on me.

Over two years, I photographed more than 50,000 photos, thousands of patients, blind people see. I started learning about water and water is the cause of so much of this disease. We would travel into the villages and we'd see people drinking out of swamps. We'd say no wonder everyone is sick. No wonder there are tumors and flesh-eating diseases and all this horrible disease.

My friend on the ship would train the locals how to tap the clean groundwater. Six weeks later at their labor there would be clean water coming out of the ground right next to the swamp. That left an even bigger impression on me than all the surgeries and all the patients that I had photographed.

I came back to New York City, and after two years somebody bought me a $16 drink on the roof of the (indiscernible) and the worlds collided. Sixteen dollars in Liberia fed a family for a month. Here it was a drink without tip.

So I started Charity Water. I wanted to do something big. I was 30 years old and wanted to tackle the greatest issue that I saw facing the poor. Right now there is a billion people, one billion people, a sixth of the world, that don't have access to something most of you in this room probably take for granted and probably have never gone out in your entire lives.

This to me growing up was a fuel can. I would take gas and I'd put it in the riding mower, and I'd go mow my parents' five acres and they'd pay me 15 bucks for it. For a couple hundred million people, the jerry can, the diesel can, is how they collect their water. It's 40 pounds full, holds five gallons.

Water as luxury. We use 150 gallons of clean water per person per day in this country, 150 gallons per person. A billion people don't even have five gallons of clean water and that is our goal. We're a sixth of the world away from getting people a 30th of what we have every single day.
In real life situations, this is what it looks like. This is northern Uganda. Eight hour lines because of the water scarcity. People get to use this every other day. On the alternate days, they dig holes at the base of this refugee camp. Like animals, they take this water back and they give it to their families and their kids. The kids often can't go to school because they have to spend their whole day collecting water. Forty pounds on their heads, back and forth in the hot sun. Child in the back has the added burden of her sister, another ten pounds.

The ones that don't get to go to school, their backs get hunched over. We'll see kids that are 20, 25 years old with nothing on their back walking around like this (demonstrating) because of the weight they have been carrying.

Saw guys in Rwanda. This is the quality of their water. Many of these communities don't have the money to boil the water because they can't afford the charcoal. The cooking in rural communities is often down with cow dung, which burns really low.

So the filtration? Woman pulls out her dress. Not a Gucci dress, not a Prada dress, just some cloth. She doubles it and she triples it, and then the water comes through it. It looks a little cleaner, but this doesn't take out any of the contaminants.

This is place I was recently in (indiscernible), northern Ethiopia, 800 people living here. Two children had fallen into this water hole and died. The community had no other source of water, so they continued to drink from it.

Very common site: kids and cows sharing the same sources of drinking water by the sides of the road. Cows are bigger so they get to go first, and the kids normally take what's left.

Schools without water. Half of the schools in the world don't have access to clean water and toilets. Half, 50 percent of the world's children in school do not have clean water.

You can see all the jerry cans. I joke. It's not very funny, but it's the iPod of Africa. The kid brings the water from the river, dirty water from the river to school every morning.

Children will meet us with signs. Number one request from the girls is toilets. Not water. Sign on the right says we want to wash, but we don't have water.

Lots of diseases, waterborne. You know this stuff. Eighty percent of all disease is actually caused by bad water, lack of sanitation.

So the good news. There are solutions for a billion people. Charity Water funds seven different solutions. We dig wells. We drill wells. Sometimes we catch the rain. Sometimes in parts of Southeast Asian when there's arsenic in the water, we filter water at the community use, we filter at the household use. Sometimes we can catch mountain springs in Haiti, other parts of Sub Saharan, Africa. And finally rehabilitating and
retraining communities where water points have been broken.

Typical hand dug well takes about six weeks, costs $5,000. The community contributes the labor. It's not very glamorous. Big concrete culvert, 600 pounds each, line the well and then an $800 pump is put on. The water is pumped out by hand.

Sometimes the water is deeper. We've dug wells now to 1,200 feet. This is a rig, costs about $10,000 to $15,000. But it's great when you hit a nice aquifer. The water shoots up. The kids get wet. Everybody scrambles.

And as we say water changes everything. It brings the communities back together. It brings dignity to the women. It brings time back to the communities. Forty billion hours are wasted in Africa just walking for water. It puts the kids back in school and radically transforms the health of these communities at the cost of $5,000 to $15,000.

So I had some new ideas about charity. I was 30. My friends weren't giving enough to charity. They had all excuses. One of the excuses was not knowing where the money went and how much of their money would go. So we created a model similar to Robin Hood, although with no endowment and no funding to begin with, where we just split the donors. One group of people would pay for the operating costs and 100 percent of everything we raised publically would go directly to the projects.

Secondly, we would just prove the work. This seemed so simple to me. Using technology, using GPS, using Google Earth to put every single well, every water project that we funded up in a transparent way so people could see where their money went.

Design was important. Charity seemed so badly designed to me. Websites had animated gifts blinking. Their materials, they cheaped out on paper. They cheaped out on design. Their first communications employee would be their 20th employee. Design was important to me so we designed cool stuff like sustainable thermoses that were educational. And e-cards, $20 e-cards, where you could send someone else a message for Valentine's Day and then we could tie two of you to a completed water project. Very creative for Easter, for Hanukkah, also for Christmas.

Intern came up with this image. She said let's put life to our stats. 4,500 kids die. Who knows what 4,500 kids look like? But maybe this image, maybe giving your kid dirty water in a baby bottle might arrest some people.

Then we went to New York City and they gave a couple hundred thousand dollars of free inventory on buses.

Then The Financial Times. I mean bizarre people ran these on their home page: Facebook, Google, MySpace.

Tried to shoot things that just made people think. These are rich kids on the Upper East Side. They pay $30,000 a year to go to school. Imagine if they had to carry 40 pounds. Imagine if your mother or your grandmother on Park Ave had to drink water that looked like that. Imagine if our banker
friends had to go to Central Park (laughter).

Then we took these exhibitions and we put them places.
This was Chelsea Market, a three-month exhibition where over a million people saw them.

Finally, I partnered with brands. Saks Fifth Avenue said, hey, look, water is an important issue, you should care. They did. They shot their mother's day and father's day catalogs completely in water, and then they gave up the windows for seven days on Fifth Avenue to put pictures of people that needed clean water and spread awareness about the issue. A risk, you could say. Customers loved it. It made all the local news. Then they went on to raise $700,000 using their customers, using their clients, and using most importantly their employees. 108 stores competing against each other, all trying to build wells. Their impact now is 140 communities around the world with clean water.

Finally, Twitter. We were the first charity to have million users on Twitter. Did something called the Twestival in January where 202 cities came together around the world in one offline night organized on Twitter and raised a quarter of a million dollars for the cause. Then lucked into a couple of celebrities giving on Twitter.

We've got a new website you can check out. It's enabling people to go out and tap their networks to bring water to communities. It's in the beta. It's eight weeks old. It's already done $544,000. It's pretty cool to check out.

All in, we've raised $11 million through 65,000 donors, so it's low level giving. People care. People care about this issue. They want to give.

I'm excited to talk to some of you about how you can help afterwards. Thanks for the opportunity.

[Applause]
MODERATOR: So if there was one thing people could do that was fairly easy tonight at their computer to help out, what would you suggest?

SCOTT HARRISON: I would say log on to the website. Learn about my Charity Water. It's basically just a tool where you can go out to your friends and your family and your network, tell them about the issue and ask them to donate small amounts of money.

We had a guy give up his 50th birthday. He said I'd like to raise $50,000, and in a few weeks he raised $72,000. We have a seven-year-old kid raising $20,000, $30,000 by using this tool. So a great way to learn more.

[Applause]
(End of video.)
CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTION

I hereby certify that the foregoing transcription is a true and accurate verbatim record of the recorded proceedings.

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