

Civic Minds

Date: Friday, December 4, 2015

E-Edition Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Article Title: **Wealthy tech execs spreading riches at early age**

Section: Main, A1

Vocabulary:

Look up the definition of **pledge**. Please write the definition and create a new sentence, using your own words.

“The **pledge** was made in an open letter to their newborn daughter, Max, who was born about a week ago.”

Comprehension Questions

1. Mark Zuckerberg, the co-founder and chief executive of Facebook, announced Tuesday that he and his wife would give _____ percent of their Facebook shares “during our lives” — holdings currently worth more than \$_____ billion — to charitable purposes.
2. How was this pledge made?
3. Zuckerberg and his wife, Dr. Priscilla Chan, said they were forming a new organization, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, to manage the money, through an unusual limited liability corporate structure. What will be their main areas of focus?
4. Zuckerberg’s charitable plans are the latest indication of a growing interest in philanthropy among Silicon Valley’s young billionaires, who, unlike previous generations of business tycoons, appear eager to do what?
5. How old is Zuckerberg and Chan?
6. Still, Larry Brilliant, who works on philanthropic issues with many Silicon Valley figures including Salesforce.com CEO Marc Benioff, and eBay co-founder Jeff Skoll, said that both the scale and timing of Zuckerberg’s commitment, coming so early in his career, were _____.
7. The Silicon Valley way of philanthropy also demands more control over what?
8. In a securities filing, Facebook said Zuckerberg plans to sell or gift approximately how much money over the next 3 years?
9. Earlier this week, Zuckerberg was also one of the billionaires who signed on to the Breakthrough Energy Coalition. Describe this group. Who organized it and what is their main goal?
10. Zuckerberg has referred to Gates as one of his childhood heroes for Gates’ zeal in building Microsoft into a colossus in the technology industry. Gates is the wealthiest person in the world, with an estimated worth of \$_____ billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. The index estimates Zuckerberg’s total worth is \$_____ billion.

Class Discussion Questions and Essay Prompts:

- Does your family give to charities? Why or why not?
- Will you give to charities in the future? Why or why not?

“We must build technology to make change. Many institutions invest money in these challenges, but most progress comes from productivity gains through innovation,” Zuckerberg and Chan wrote in the letter to their daughter.

“We must participate in policy and advocacy to shape debates. Many institutions are unwilling to do this, but progress must be supported by movements to be sustainable.”

- What are the areas you think they’re talking about in their letter to Max?

Zuckerberg has admired Gates’ philanthropic endeavors, too, becoming one of the first people to join the Giving Pledge, an initiative started by Gates and Warren Buffett to get wealthy individuals and their families to give away more than half their wealth to charities during their lifetimes or after. Gates has pledged to give away at least 95 percent of his wealth.

- What do you think about the “Giving Pledge?”

Bill Gates: “The example you’re setting today is an inspiration to us and the world,” they said. “We can be confident of this: Max and every child born today will grow up in a world that is better than the one we know now. As you say, ‘seeds planted now will grow.’ Your work will bear fruit for many decades to come.”

- What do you think our world will see as a result from the “trickle down” effect of their monetary contributions to better our society?

“Having this child has made us think about all of the things that should be improved in the world for her whole generation,” Zuckerberg said in a video. “The only way that we reach our full human potential is if we’re able to unlock the gifts of every person around the world.”

- Do you agree or disagree with his statement above? Can we, in reality, unlock the gifts of everyone in the world? Why or why not?

Essay

“The only question now is: How many of his peers in Silicon Valley and beyond will join him?”

- How many more millionaires & billionaires will join them in their commitment to giving their money away to charitable efforts to better our world?
- If you were wealthy, would you give? How much would you give? Which organizations or issues would you be most interested in helping with? Why?

Newspaper-related CBA activity: U.S. Policy

How the United States government interacts with the world affects people across the globe. Analyze and evaluate the causes and effects of US foreign policy on people in the United States and across the world.

- Using The Seattle Times e-edition, find an article from this week that deals with world politics or foreign policy.
- What are the main points of view from someone living in that particular country? How is that “view” similar and different than your own opinion, regarding the specific issue the article is discussing?
- Why is it important to study and learn about foreign policy? How does it help you understand the world we live in, using current issues and events?

Civic Minds in The Seattle Times is posted to the Web on Friday. Please share the NIE program with other teachers. To sign-up for the electronic edition of the newspaper please call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.

Copyright © 2015 The Seattle Times Company