

Humble Heroes

By Jordan Hattar

For the month of November, I have decided to highlight six humble heroes who constantly inspire me:

Carl Wilkens, American, Redefining the “Enemy”



I invited Carl (pictured on the far right) to speak at my high school in 2010 and over the past 10 years we have become the best of friends. He also serves as my mentor and role model.

What stands out about Carl:

He will open the passenger car door for anyone; he demonstrates that service is not the collection of large acts that someone gets recognized for, but rather a collection of intentional small acts in our daily life. Carl gives us a new definition of what it means to “be first.”

[Watch](#) *this Inspirational Video about Carl’s decision to stay and help in Rwanda*

Saria Samakie, Syrian, Forgiveness and Future



I met Saria in the country of Jordan in 2015 while working on Syrian refugee projects.

What stands out about Saria:

Saria inspires us to put our problems in perspective and find creative solutions. Saria's story illustrates the power of believing in oneself. Additionally, Saria's story is a gentle reminder that all situations can potentially include exceptions to the rules if you stay true to yourself and your life's mission.

[Watch](#) this Inspirational documentary about Saria

Deng Jongkuch, South Sudanese, Story of Hope & Resilience



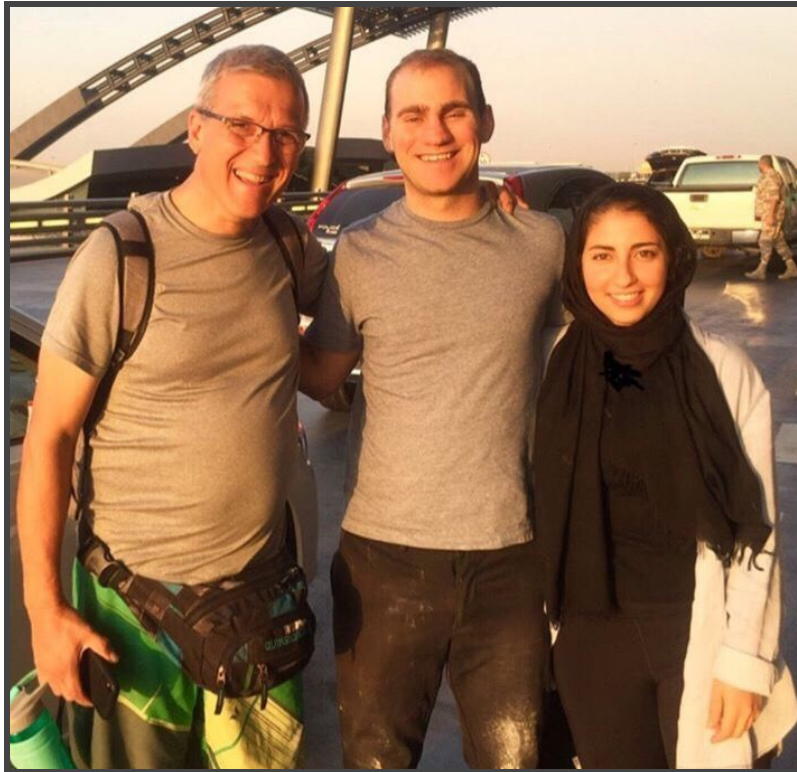
I worked alongside Deng at the age of eighteen in his home village of Malek, South Sudan.

What stands out about Deng:

He is the most humble person I know: he even gave up his own bed to help a stranger. There is no situation that Deng cannot succeed in.

Inspirational children's picture book written by Deng [here](#)

Dina Altarawneh, Jordanian, Climate Change/Zero Waste/Simplistic Living



I met Dina (far right in the picture above) at an event in which she was translating at Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar.

What stands out about Dina: She reminds us of the *power of one*. Dina calls on us not to be perfect but rather for all of us to imperfectly make an effort. Dina also challenges us to start somewhere when we have the desire to make a difference; starting

somewhere requires planning, being intentional with our actions, and connecting our daily habits with the earth that surrounds us.

Read her inspirational blog about plastic use and individual action steps to reduce [here](#)

Valeria Riquelme, The Motivation to Take Action



I met Valeria while speaking at her high school in Hong Kong in 2018 (pictured 2nd from the right).

What stands out about Valeria:

An energetic, optimistic soul, transforming compassion into action. Valeria pours her heart into what she sets out to do: one

example is when she organized *Refugee Race*, which raised awareness of the plight of refugees as well as more than \$5,000 to support a nursing and midwife hospital in northern Syria. Valeria combines her passions with needs in the world and knows how to end up at that intersection.

Watch Inspirational video of her *Refugee Race* event [here](#)

Nicholas Kristof, New York Times Columnist



Although I have never met Nicholas, he shaped my worldview at an early age.

What stands out about Nicholas: Nicholas has consistently put himself in harm's way to shed light on stories of the marginalized, malnourished, and oppressed.

Nicholas reminds us that our family is much larger than

we often tell ourselves, that we could have been born into any circumstance in this world, and that we have the ability to act; we have the ability to stand up for our brothers and sisters facing hardship, wherever they might be.

Read Kristof's inspirational article about America's values [here](#)