

- *Speech made by do good Consulting's Laura Huth upon accepting the East Central Illinois Association of Fundraising Professional's Lisa Mauney 2009 Fundraiser of the Year award, November 13, 2009*

The Power of 1+1+1

“In 1991, back in the days of VCR’s – and back when I was still a junior in college – I watched a movie that changed my life. In *The Wrath of Grapes*, a documentary about Cesar Chavez, I came to know a mathematical principle that would frame every day of my career from that day forward.

In this documentary, 1+1+1 equaled more than 3. It equaled change. Social change.

On that Tuesday evening watching that video many years ago, my calling became clear to me, and the path to it clearer still. I was going to be a social change activist.

I’ll be the first to admit, and my parents the second, that choosing ‘social change’ as a career option, and back in 1991, was not all that understood or even popular. It certainly was not glamorous, nor was it well-paid.

But I stood with it, and molded it into something that felt right – something that I was good at and made a difference at.

Using Chavez’s principle of building a movement by talking to one person, then another, and another, the path my social change career took would be one not of protest signs and not of marches. It would be one made up of donations, appeal letters, and annual campaigns. I learned how to mobilize people behind the things they love and support using the power of their dollars. And in that way, I learned how 1+1+1 equals so much more than 3. I see it when I look at projects like the Common Ground Food Co-op and their beautiful new store. I see it when I can walk through the new tallgrass prairie cultivated by Grand Prairie Friends.

No matter the number of zeros after the gifts that the fundraisers – the development officers – in this room and beyond facilitate, each and every one is added to the next and equals up to something much larger than the sum of its parts – a better world. Now that’s a career I’m glad I really sunk my teeth into and I’m glad you are all a part of it, working together to make the world a better place.”