

**Contact:**

Billy Connelly  
[billyc@gap.ca](mailto:billyc@gap.ca)  
617.877.6745

Tim Chan  
[timc@gap.ca](mailto:timc@gap.ca)  
416.260.0999 x 1353

## **Gap Adventures Staff Celebrates 20th Anniversary with “Best Contest Ever” & Spontaneous Fundraiser – helping Initiative to Build 20/20 Vision Centre in Cambodia**

*Inspired by contest winners, staff donations fuel Planeterra Foundation's “Ignite The Nite” event to help raise \$60,000 for critical vision centre.*

TORONTO, ON, October 22, 2010 – To celebrate [Gap Adventures'](#) 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and its fundraising event, [Ignite the Nite](#), founder Bruce Poon Tip suggested a contest for employees. Gap Adventures staff around the globe were asked to create short videos that showcase an engaging story of how they have personally put into action one of the company's five Core Values:

1. We Love Changing People's Lives
2. Lead with Service
3. Create Happiness & Community
4. Do the Right Thing
5. Embrace the Bizarre

Entrants were required to demonstrate how their lives changed, or how their story changed the world and the people in it for the better.

At stake was the ultimate concert experience: two VIP box tickets to Neil Young's Annual Bridge School Benefit Concert, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, in Mountain View, California. The show will feature music legends Pearl Jam, Elvis Costello, Billy Idol, Jackson Browne, and the reunion (after 40 years!) of Buffalo Springfield.

Poon Tip had not envisioned staff response and the events that followed. “What started as just a cool contest quickly evolved into something much bigger. In true Gap Adventures fashion, it has turned into a way for people to pay-it-forward and really 'live' our core values,” he said.

The contest winners were announced Tuesday: Neil Hamdani from Toronto, and Matt Kinch from Gap Adventures' office in Lima, Peru. [Both videos](#) highlighted the “We Love Changing People's Lives” core value.

The challenge demonstrated how well employees understand and embrace the core values – not just in the Base Camp office in Toronto, but throughout the company’s global offices.

Two hours later, Gap Adventures’ interoffice communications channels were buzzing. Neil offered his colleagues a chance to win his ticket. In a message to all staff, he wrote: “In the spirit of the way that I raised money [for Rady to buy his Tuk Tuk], I challenge all Gappers to do the same, reach out to your social networks, and convince them to donate to support [Planeterra](#)’s [‘Ignite the Nite’](#) fundraiser.”

Planeterra, the non-profit Poon Tip founded in 2003, is raising \$60,000 to establish a permanent vision centre to help restore sight to thousands of rural Cambodians.

“The Gapper with the most donations made in her/his name by noon on Thursday gets my ticket! Let the ripple begin!” Neil announced.

Moments later, another Gapper, touched by Neil’s video and announcement, was inspired to pay-it-forward and offered a \$100 donation to the person who collected the most donations up to a few hours before the cut-off time.

For the next several hours, Gappers from around the globe chimed in with their contribution to the spontaneous, second contest. By noon Thursday, Gap Adventures staff had voluntarily raised an additional \$2,000 for the 20/20 Vision Centre.

“Today, we did the right thing,” says Poon Tip. “Giving back and Planeterra are at the heart of our company because they are about changing people’s lives,” he added.

To view entrants’ videos, click [here](#). For more information on Ignite the Nite and Gap Adventures, visit [www.ignitethenite.com](http://www.ignitethenite.com) or [www.gapadventures.com](http://www.gapadventures.com)

#### **TIMELINE:**

1. Contest announced Fri., 10/15 @ 5pm ET
2. Submissions due Tues., 10/19 @ 12pm ET (72 hours to create and submit!)
3. Winners announced Tues., 10/19 @ 5pm ET – videos shared with staff
4. Wed., 10/20 @ 9:49am ET, Neil, inspired to pay it forward, offers his prize to the Gapper who secures the most in donations for Planeterra’s “Ignite the Nite” event
5. Others, inspired by Neil’s & Matt’s videos and Neil’s selfless act, announce personal contributions, beginning Wed., 10/20 @ 11:30am ET
6. From around the world, others announce contributions throughout the day
7. Thurs., 10/21 @ 12pm ET – Milestone: more than \$2,000 committed by staff to support Planeterra’s “Ignite the Nite” event to help build 20/20 Vision Centre in Cambodia

### **About Gap Adventures**

Gap Adventures is a world leader in the adventure travel industry offering small group adventures on all seven continents and beyond to more than 100,000 global travelers annually. The award-winning trips, which focus on culture, nature and active travel, are ideal for those with a sense of adventure – people who want to leave the beaten path and authentically immerse themselves in a local culture or environment to experience the real world in a sustainable manner. Demonstrating its ongoing cultural, social and economic commitment to responsible tourism, Gap Adventures established the Planeterra Foundation, as a way the company and its passengers can give back to the communities visited. For more information, please visit [www.gapadventures.com](http://www.gapadventures.com) and [www.planeterra.org](http://www.planeterra.org).

###

Keywords:

- gap adventures, ignite the nite, Planeterra, Best Contest Ever