Emmanuel “Manny” Ohonme has achieved national and international recognition as a philanthropist, businessman and author. He is the Founder and President of Samaritan’s Feet International, Founder and President of Barefoot Legacies Group, acclaimed author of Sole Purpose, and sought-after, inspiring speaker and story-teller.

Manny was born in Lagos, Nigeria. When he was nine years old, his life changed: a stranger from Wisconsin approached him and invited him to enter a contest where the prize was a pair of shoes. For Manny, to own a pair of shoes was beyond his wildest dreams. Manny won that contest and won his first pair of shoes. But even more important than the shoes were the words of hope from the “Good Samaritan” from Wisconsin. Those shoes became a symbol of hope to Manny and a catalyst to his love for basketball. Over time, his dreams became reality, and Manny was awarded a scholarship to play basketball in the United States. He earned multiple degrees in business and economics, then began a career in logistics, supply chain management, and business development within the technology industry.

But Manny never forgot the children of his homeland or the “Good Samaritan” that encouraged him to believe in his dreams and never give up.

In 2003, inspired by the events in his own life, Manny and his wife, Tracie, founded Samaritan’s Feet International, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, with the purpose of sharing hope with those in need by washing their feet, giving them a new pair of shoes, and helping them to believe that dreams can come true. To date, more than 5.5 million pairs of shoes have been distributed to needy children in over 70 countries and 300 U.S. cities. As the number grows, so does the passion to see more young people receive a pair of shoes and the message of hope and inspiration that they too can see their dreams become reality.

Manny is proof that, if you dream, and dream big, you can achieve whatever you set your mind to. He has been inspiring men and women on issues of vision, purpose, and social justice for over 15 years. He travels extensively, addressing audiences on topics including, “The Power of Purpose,” “Building Your Personal Brand,” “The power of YES,” “Eluding the Myth of Success,” “Dying without Shoes,” and many more.

Manny has become a frequent panelist and sought after expert on social justice, supply chain, product marketing, and philanthropy. Manny’s eclectic 20-year career has taken him from marketing, public relations, business development, fundraising, and entrepreneurship at major technology startup companies to becoming the CEO of one of the largest humanitarian footwear relief organizations in the world. Manny has worked with some of the largest corporations during his extensive career from Levi Strauss, Michelin Tire, FedEx, Kroger, and Wal-Mart to General Motors, Lowe’s, Turner, Nissan, Skechers, NCAA, NFL, and the NBA. For a barefoot child growing up in Nigeria that didn’t own a pair of tennis shoes until he was 9 years of age, today, Manny now manufactures his own line of shoes.
Manny has worked with world leaders, Presidents, Governors, Mayors, and global partners in developing transformational strategies to encourage education and eradicating the public health risks associated with not wearing shoes worldwide. Every fall in Charlotte, Manny and his team hosts the popular BAREFOOT GALA drawing hundreds of men, women, and business leaders from the U.S. and abroad.

His commitment to the community is evident through service on numerous boards as president and in other roles that have earned him local and national awards and recognition, most notably by the City of Birmingham, the City of Atlanta, the City of San Bernardino, the NCAA, Pride Magazine, the City of Charlotte, the Office Depot Foundation, the President and the Federal Republic of Burundi, and the State of Indiana.

He has been a guest speaker and presented inspirational messages around the world. He recently spoke at the Catalyst conference, the National Justice Conference, and TEDxCharlotte. He has spoken before presidents of countries, Governors of States, CEOs of corporations, mega churches, religious and educational conferences, as well as professional athletic associations. Manny is able to weave his inspiring real-life experiences into his presentations to help you become all you were intended to be.

Today, Manny is speaking all over the world inspiring people from all walks of life to dream, and dream big. He is repaying that gift, with a goal to provide 10 million shoes to 10 million children worldwide in the next 10 years through Samaritan’s Feet.