

Greg Mortenson (bio as of January 2010)

Greg Mortenson is the co-founder of nonprofit Central Asia Institute [www.ikat.org](http://www.ikat.org), founder of Pennies For Peace [www.penniesforpeace.org](http://www.penniesforpeace.org), co-author of New York Times bestseller “Three Cups of Tea” [www.threecupsoftea.com](http://www.threecupsoftea.com), and author of bestseller “Stones into Schools” [www.stonesintoschools.com](http://www.stonesintoschools.com).

In 2009, Mortenson received Pakistan’s highest civil award, Sitara-e-Pakistan (“Star of Pakistan”) for his dedicated and humanitarian effort to promote education and literacy in rural areas for fifteen years.

Several bi-partisan U.S. Congressional representatives nominated Mortenson for the Nobel Peace Prize in both 2008 and 2009. The award recipient is chosen by a secret process and announced in October the following year.

Mortenson was born in 1957, and grew up on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro, Tanzania (1958 to 1973). His father Dempsey, founded Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC) [www.kcmc.ac.tz](http://www.kcmc.ac.tz) a hospital, and mother, Jerene, founded the International School Moshi.

He served in the U.S. Army in Germany (1977-1979), where he received the Army Commendation Medal, and graduated from the University of South Dakota with a degree in Nursing and Chemistry in 1983.

In July 1992, Mortenson’s sister, Christa, died from a massive seizure after a lifelong struggle with epilepsy on the eve of a trip to visit Dysersville, Iowa, where the baseball movie, ‘Field of Dreams’, was filmed in a cornfield.

To honor his sister’s memory, in 1993, Mortenson climbed Pakistan’s K2, the world’s second highest mountain in the Karakoram range.

While recovering from the climb in a village called Korphe, Mortenson met a group of children sitting in the dirt writing with sticks in the sand, and made a promise to help them build a school.

From that rash promise, grew a remarkable humanitarian campaign, in which Mortenson has dedicated his life to promote education, especially for girls, in remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

As of 2009, Mortenson has established 131 schools in rural and often volatile regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan, which provide education to over 58,000 children, including 44,000 girls, where few education opportunities existed before.

His work has not been without difficulty. In 1996, he survived an eight day armed kidnapping by the Taliban in Pakistan’s Northwest Frontier Province tribal areas, escaped a 2003 firefight with feuding Afghan warlords by hiding for eight hours under putrid animal hides in a truck going to a leather-tanning factory. He has overcome fatwehs from enraged Islamic mullahs, endured CIA investigations, and also received threats from fellow Americans after 9/11, for helping Muslim

children with education.

Mortenson is a living hero to rural communities of Afghanistan and Pakistan, where he has gained the trust of Islamic leaders, military commanders, government officials and tribal chiefs from his tireless effort to champion education, especially for girls.

He is one of few foreigners who has worked extensively for sixteen years (over 75 months in the field) in rural villages where few foreigners go.

TV newscaster, Tom Brokaw, calls Mortenson, "one ordinary person, with the right combination of character and determination, who is really changing the world".

Congresswoman Mary Bono (Rep – Cali.) says, "I've learned more from Greg Mortenson about the causes of terrorism than I did during all our briefings on Capitol Hill. He is a true hero, whose courage, and compassion exemplify the true ideals of the American spirit."

#### MILITARY

Three Cups of Tea is required reading for U.S. senior military commanders, for officers in the Norwegian War College, Forsvarsnett, for U.S. Special Forces deploying to Afghanistan, Pentagon officers in counter-insurgency training, and Canadian Defense Ministry members.

The book has been read by General David Petraeus – CENTCOM Commander, Admiral Mike Mullen - Chairman Joint Chief of Staff, and Admiral Eric Olson – SOCOM Special Forces commander, and several other U.S. military commanders who advocate for building relationships as a part of an overall strategic plan for peace. Mortenson has addressed the National Defense Senior Leadership Conference at the Pentagon, visited over two dozen military bases, NORAD, and been to the Air Force, Naval and West Point Academies.

While not overseas half the year, Mortenson, 52, lives in Montana with his wife, Dr. Tara Bishop, a clinical psychologist, and two young children.

Book tour, reviews and media on [www.threecupsoftea.com](http://www.threecupsoftea.com)

Central Asia Institute website [www.ikat.org](http://www.ikat.org)

Pennies for Peace website [www.penniesforpeace.org](http://www.penniesforpeace.org)

Stones into Schools website [www.stonesintoschools.com](http://www.stonesintoschools.com)

#### AWARDS

1975 US Army Commendation medal

1998 American Alpine Club David Brower Conservation Award

2002 Peacemaker Award from Montana Community Mediation Center

2003 Climbing Magazine "Golden Piton Award" for humanitarian effort

2003 Vincent Lombardi Champion Award for humanitarian service

2003 Peacemaker of the Year" Benedictine Monks, Santa Fe, NM

2003 Outdoor Person of the Year - Outdoor Magazine

2003 Salzburg Seminar fellow, sponsored by Microsoft

2004 Freedom Forum "Free Spirit Award" - National Press Club, D.C.

2004 Jeanette Rankin Peace Award - Institute for Peace  
2005 Men's Journal 'Anti-Terror' Award by Senator John McCain  
2005 Red Cross "Humanitarian of The Year" Montana  
2006 Golden Fleur-de-lis Award from Comune Firenze, Italy  
2007 Medical Education Hall of Fame Award, Toledo, OH  
2007 Rotary International Paul Harris Award for Promoting Friendly Relations Among People  
2007 Mountain Institute Award for Excellence in Mountain Community Service  
2007 Dayton Literary Peace Prize – Book Award, Dayton, OH  
2008 Citizen Center for Diplomacy - National Award for Citizen Diplomacy  
2008 Courage of Conscience Award – The Peace Abbey, Sherborn, MA  
2008 Graven Award - Wartburg College, IA  
2008 National Award for Citizen Diplomacy - Citizen Center for Diplomacy  
2008 Academy of Achievement Award  
2008 Sword of Loyola – St. Louis University  
2009 Sitara-e-Pakistan "Star of Pakistan" (Pakistan's highest civilian award)  
2009 Mary Lockwood Founders Medal For Education - Daughters of The American Revolution  
2009 Archon Award - Sigma Theta Tau International (Nursing Award)  
2009 National Education Association NEA – Human Rights Award  
2009 Austin College Leadership Award – Sherman TX – life's work to take a courageous stand on education issues for peace  
2009 City College San Francisco Amicus Collegii Award – Promoting peace through education  
2009 Jefferson Award for Community Service: Harvard Kennedy School of Business  
2009 US News & World Report: America's Best Twenty Leaders

#### HONORARY DOCTORATE DEGREES

2007 Concordia College, Moorhead, MN  
2007 University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD  
2008 Montana State University, Bozeman, MT  
2008 Villanova University, PA  
2008 University of San Francisco, CA  
2008 University of Washington-Bothell, WA  
2008 Lewis & Clark College, OR  
2008 Seattle University, WA  
2009 Colby College, ME  
2009 St. Louis University, MO  
2010 University of Pennsylvania  
2010 University of Colorado

#### THREE CUPS OF TEA BOOK – AWARDS AND MENTIONS

2006 Time Magazine Asia Book of The Year  
2006 People Magazine – Critics Choice  
2006 Publisher's Weekly – Starred Review  
2006 Kirkus Review – Starred Review  
2006 Borders Bookstore Original Voices Selection  
2007 Banff Mountain Festival Book Award Finalist  
2007 Kiriya Prize Nonfiction Award

2007 Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association - Nonfiction Award

2008 Montana Honor Book Award

2008 Dayton Literary Prize Nonfiction Award – Runner up

2009 Mom’s Choice Award – Author of the Year

2009 Gambrinus Giuseppe Mazzotti Literary Prize (Italy)

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