



Patrick stays simple and true to his Regis University roots: “When everything is said and done,” he says, “nothing that I do is of my own creation, since it is done for the poor and for God’s kingdom.”

Patrick Atkinson, CPS '00

Patrick Atkinson, a graduate of Regis University’s Master of Nonprofit Management (MNM) program, was a Colorado Trust Fellow, served as commencement speaker at his own graduation and completed his degree without having set foot on campus prior to the ceremony.

Patrick grew up in Bismarck, N.D., and graduated magna cum laude from Minnesota State University Moorhead, after which he worked with street gangs and child prostitutes in New York City during the day. At night, he took the subway to the South Bronx, where he hammered an abandoned tenement into a soup kitchen for Part Of The Solutions (POTS) community program.

In 1983, Patrick was asked to work in Central America’s violence-filled war zones. Over the next seven years, he engaged in war-zone reconciliation and post-war reconstruction efforts in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Haiti, and Columbia; founding 38 specialized clinics, schools, vocational training centers, street-child programs, and homes for war-orphaned children. During this time, he was wounded in a car-bombing in El Salvador.

In 1991, Patrick founded The GOD’S CHILD Project ([www.Godschild.org](http://www.Godschild.org)) in Guatemala. Its goal was to provide follow-up care and education to 35-50 adolescents Patrick had removed from the nation’s killing fields. With the quickly-growing Project staffed almost entirely by volunteers, Patrick realized he needed intensive administrative training, and

in 1996, was accepted into Regis’ MNM program.

“It’s not that I was floundering,” says Patrick. “It’s that I didn’t want to flounder. The GOD’S CHILD Project was doubling in size each year and we were receiving hundreds of volunteers from around the world. It was as though I had gone out for a leisurely swim and found myself surfing a monster tidal wave.”

Patrick has founded and today directs The GOD’S CHILD Project and affiliate programs in Africa, India, Central America, and the United States that provide care and education to nearly 14,000 people. He has received the Guatemalan Congressional Medal of Honor and was named Goodwill Ambassador for the country, has been knighted by a Spanish Order, and is the subject of a biography entitled “The Dream Maker.” He is the co-author of four books and is working on three more. His “Institute for Trafficked, Exploited & Missing Persons” ([www.ITEMP.org](http://www.ITEMP.org)) is Central America’s largest anti-human trafficking program.

Based in Antigua, Guatemala, with residences he can use in Blantyre Malawi, Minneapolis, Minn., and Bismarck, N.D., Patrick stays simple and true to his Regis University roots: “When everything is said and done,” he says, “nothing that I do is of my own creation, since it is done for the poor and for God’s kingdom. All of the inspirations and skills that I need to get the job done come from God.” (p. 240, “The Dream Maker,” Paulist Press)