

6 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Steven Mintz

Longtime Montclair resident connects underserved kids with global nonprofits

WRITTEN BY ANTHONY ZURITA

If you live in Montclair, you might run into Steven Mintz walking down to Brookdale Park or dining at local restaurants. Mintz, 68, is a 30-year resident and has raised two children in the town.



During that time, he has enjoyed a successful career as an editor and financial writer. He currently runs a nonprofit, HighschoolNGOconnect, that helps students with limited resources connect with other nonprofits to find out what it's like to work in the industry. The organization has received support from the Victoria Foundation in Newark; in June, they received a grant from Investors Foundation. Here are six things you should know about him.



ART ALLIANCE Two students at Uplift Academy in Newark pose with the Animodule Eagle they built in collaboration with students in Akure, Nigeria; (Inset) Steven Mintz.

HE WAS ASSIGNED BY CONGRESS TO HELP WITH AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS. Following the bursting of the housing bubble and the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy in 2008, Congress formed a group of investigators, economists, professors and writers to write an extensive report of the financial crisis. “Our job as writers was to spell out what happened,” Mintz says. The 600-page report, called “The Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission Report,” was released in 2010 and became the leading source of information on what happened to cause the Great Recession.

“It was extraordinary,” Mintz says of the experience. “Very pleased to be around very smart people.”

HIGHSCHOOLNGOCONNECT WORKS WITH FIVE SCHOOLS IN NEW JERSEY. In 2017, Mintz launched HighschoolNGOconnect to help kids in areas with limited resources connect with nonprofits around the world. The program features a rigorous curriculum for students who want to be involved with

nongovernmental organizations like the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders. “Our foundation asks, how do you take compassion and turn it into action?” Mintz says.

The foundation currently works with International High School, Eastside/School of Government and Public Administration, and Rosa L. Parks Arts High School, all in Paterson; West Side High School and Uplift Academy, both in Newark; and Stem Innovation Academy of the >

COURTESY OF STEVEN MINTZ



CONNECTING WITH THE WORLD Students in the West Side School chapter of HighschoolNGOconnect at the United Nations last May.

Oranges in East Orange.

“You cannot help but be moved by these children and by their imagination and compassion,” Mintz says. “The only thing that is lacking is the resources.”

Students working with the foundation recently connected with members of a foundation based in Nigeria, where they compared sculptures called Animodules that they’d all made, and added designs from each other’s creations.

HE’S LOOKING TO EXPAND HIS NONPROFIT. Mintz hopes to start working with other schools in the future, but is happy with the progress he has made so far. “You can’t change 15 years of being disadvantaged, but I feel very moved that I can do anything that gives them a sense that they can be part of this world,” Mintz says.

HE HAS WRITTEN FOR THE ECONOMIST GROUP AND WORKED WITH TIME INC. Mintz wrote for the Economist Group of publications for seven years, and focused on corporate finance for CFO Magazine. He later switched to Time Inc., where he created custom magazines for the New York Stock Exchange and Fidelity Investments.

HE IS A PUBLISHED AUTHOR, AND HELPED WRITE A PBS TELEVISION SPECIAL. In 1995 he released a book called *Five Eminent Contrarians: Careers, Perspectives and Investment Tactics* that broke down how contrarian investors go about their professions. The investors included Humphrey B. Neill, John B. Neff, Dean LeBaron, David L. Babson and Michael Aronstein. He also co-wrote a book called

Beyond Wall Street: The Art of Investing, which eventually became a PBS television special. “*Beyond Wall Street* was a wonderful collaboration,” Mintz says.

HE WANTS TO FIGHT THE PERCEPTION ABOUT PEOPLE FROM AREAS WITH FEWER RESOURCES.

Mintz says that the students who grow up in areas like Paterson and Newark face a unique set of challenges that shape them. They look out for each other and show compassion to others, something people may not see from the outside. “They’re on the front line of humanitarian challenges,” says Mintz. He hopes to be a pillar of support for the students in underprivileged communities, and to help them overcome their circumstances. “You cannot help but be moved by these children.” ■

COURTESY OF STEVEN MINTZ