

CHARLES DECKER FOUNDATION*

Helping Children in Need in the Dominican Republic

Helping Orfanatos Niños de Cristo•Jackies House•Orphanage Hope of a Child•Fundacion Caridad y Salud
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Charles E. Decker
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PRESS RELEASE

“Mad Man in the Caribbean”

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To: New York Times, Variety, Hollywood Reporter, Wall Street Journal, Advertising Age

RE: “Giving Back” Section

Charlie Decker, a real life *MadMan* (as in the TV show *Madmen*) who developed the “Milk Mustache” campaign of “Got Milk?” fame still plies his trade, only now, in the Caribbean. And now his clients are 1,000+ abandoned, many orphaned, children in the Dominican Republic.

Before trading in his brief case for a pair of flip flops, former Madison Avenue advertising executive Charlie Decker was involved in some of the most famous advertising and marketing campaigns of the 80’s and 90’s ranging from “Mikey” (*He likes it!*) for LIFE Cereal, the first national campaign for Gatorade, to the original “Milk Mustache” campaign.

Today, from an “office” (i.e. a wicker chair) looking out at palm trees and the Caribbean, in the Dominican Republic, Charlie’s only “client” is approximately are the indigent, abandoned and sometimes orphaned children in the Dominican Republic, most being cared for by 4 orphanages Charlie “adopted.”

Before heading to the Caribbean, Charlie was a a senior executive with BBDO Advertising, Quaker Oats (now part of Pepsico) the Milk Processors Board, and Warner Bros. “I always had a plan to leave the corporate world at some point and start ‘working’ for those less fortunate than me. I started living half time in the Dominican Republic in 2004, and saw the large number of

indigent, often abandoned very young children. I started volunteering at an orphanage near my home in the town of La Romana. It had little support and needed help.

“It didn’t take long for my *Madison Avenue* juices to kick in and launch a program to bring much needed support to this orphanage (and subsequently 3 others)”

Charlie started the Charles Decker Foundation, (CHARLES DECKER FOUNDATION.ORG) and was quickly given tax free status by the IRS as a 501 (c)(3). The Decker Foundation now brings support and volunteers to 1,000+ children who live in 3 orphanages: *Orfanato Ninos de Cristo* in La Romana, *Jackie’s House* in Santo Domingo, *Orphanage Hope of A Child* in Monte Crisiti, on the border with Haiti, and *Fundacion Caridad y Salud’s* childrens activity center and mini school for very poor children in Las Matas de Farfan, also at the Haitian border.

Decker says the experience has been indescribable, not only in the response of the children but also how people respond to his quest for help for children in a country many have never visited.

The children in these 3 orphanages range in age from 6 months to 18 years and are not available for adoption. From *Orfanato Ninos de Cristo* in La Romana, where most of the children are girls as they are most vulnerable in these circumstances, 4 girls are now attending medical school, two studying law, two civil engineering and one is a very promising artist. The Decker Foundation is just getting started with a scholarship program to help as many go to college as possible. We are also in the early stages of developing job training opportunities.

Charlie is very hands-on as he is there every month, he personally underwrites all operating costs of the foundation and they have no executive salaries.

He keeps a foot in the business world with a real estate company in Manhattan and the Dominican Republic, and an advertising consulting practice, Decker Associates.

He also plays competitive squash, swims, runs, plays full court basketball and has a seven-piece traditional jazz band known as *Charlie Decker’s Hudson River Jazz Band*, in which Charlie plays guitar and banjo. He is also editing a documentary he shot in Cuba featuring the island’s music and dance and is also at work on a screenplay set in the Dominican Republic.

If you want to speak with Charlie (or schedule a visit as many *Mad Men* friends have) you can contact him at 212-691-7434 or CharlesDecker49@gmail.com

“Mad Man”? (*“hombre loco?”*)

Charlie’s reply *“hombre con suerte”* (lucky man!)



