

The Corporation – An Alternative View Lecture Series: Can A Corporation Change the World and Make A Profit?

By Jessie Gao, LL.M. Candidate 2015 | October 9, 2014

On September 29, 2014, the Berkeley Center for Law, Business and the Economy (BCLBE) hosted a lunchtime talk with Vivienne and Eric Harr about the entrepreneurship of Vivienne Harr and the stories behind her lemonade business and “Make a Stand.”

After seeing a photo of two enslaved boys, [Vivienne Harr](#), a ten-year-old girl, decided to start a single-person lemonade stand for 365 days to combat child slavery. But after 365 days, she did not stop. Vivienne attracted many customers as well as investors to her “lemonade business.” She was invited to ring the bell at the Initial Public Offering of Twitter as a successful example of how people can change the world via Twitter, and now has over 24 thousand followers.

Two years later, together with her father [Eric Harr](#), Vivienne decided to do something bigger. She launched “[Make a Stand](#)” (which offers the mobile app “Make a Stand”) an online charity and funding platform on which anyone can create an initiative.

Eric discussed some of the challenges they faced during the set-up, such as deciding whether to start a non-profit or for-profit organization. Despite fears of potential challenges and interferences by the shareholders, they decided that Make a Stand should be a for-profit corporation. Further, Eric had considered keeping the lemonade business separate from Make a Stand, but without the initial shareholders’ funds and support, he and Vivienne might not have reached their level of success. With the help of attorneys, they designed the corporate structure so that the initial shareholders of the lemonade business and those of Make a Stand respectively held 50 percent of each business entity.

Vivienne and Eric’s discussion contributed to larger questions about the role of a corporation in society, such as whether there is a clear line between non-profit and for-profit corporations where social responsibilities are concerned. More broadly, the story of Make a Stand’s formation demonstrated the lawyer’s role as an architect of the company. Without a good architect, there will be no remarkable skyscrapers. And without a good lawyer, there will be no creative solutions to achieve the complex business needs of a company.