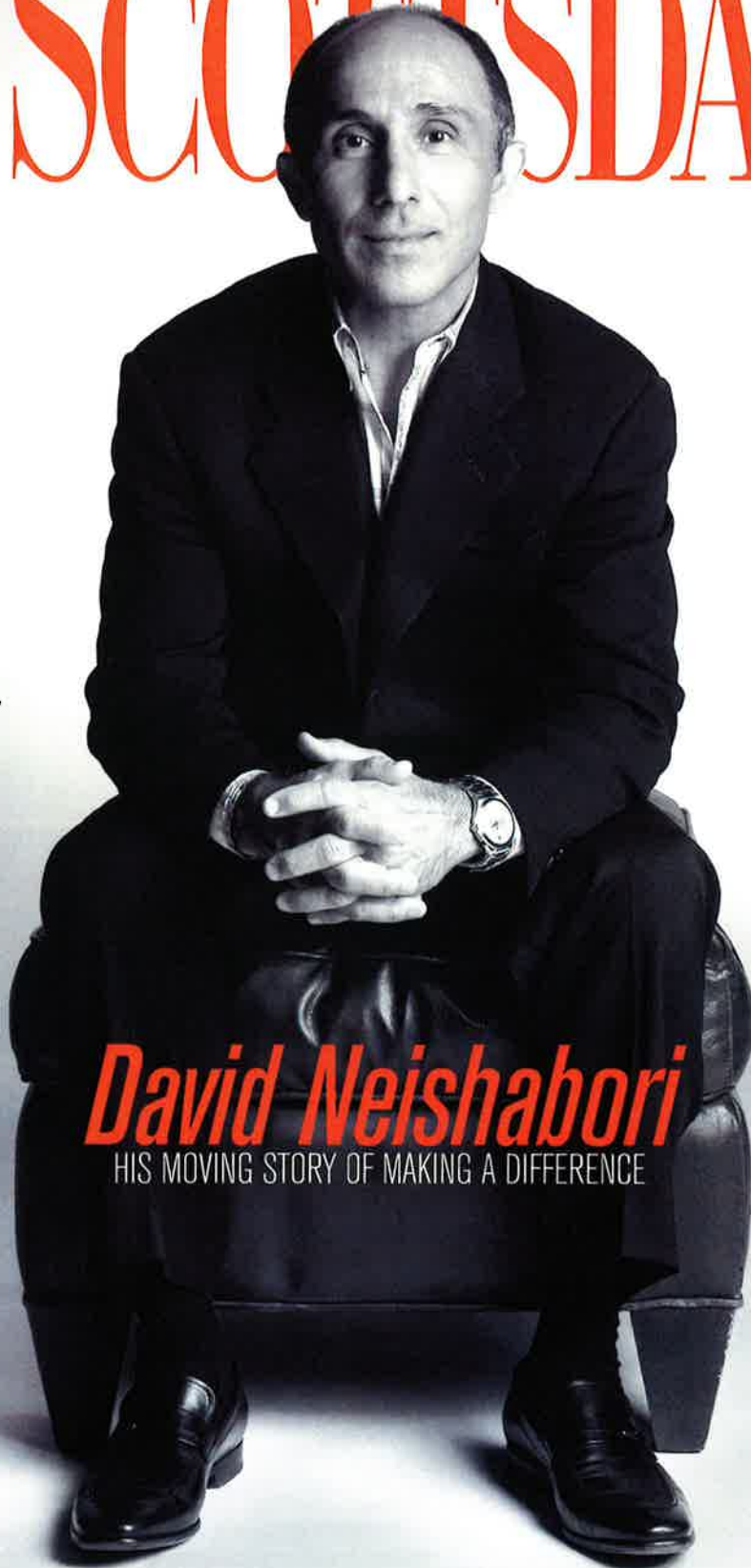


# SO SCOTTSDALE!

**A  
NEW  
ENVY**  
THE POWER  
COUPLE BEHIND  
THE NEW LUXURY  
LIVING LOCALE

**COOL  
OFF**  
WHERE TO  
GO FOR COOL  
TREATS

**LIGHT  
BITES**  
SMALL, FILLING  
AND DELICIOUS  
MEALS



***David Neishabori***

HIS MOVING STORY OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Have you ever watched a documentary or news story about people who need help and been inspired to act? For David Neishabori, the answer is a resounding yes.

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AZADI Fine Rugs owner **David Neishabori** has a generous heart and a passion to help

BY SHANA SCHWARZ  
PHOTOS BY CARL SCHULTZ

The documentary, *Waiting for Mamu*, a film by Morgan Spurlock and Susan Sarandon about the CNN 2012 Hero of the Year Pushpa Basnet, shares the story of what it means for a child to grow up in prison and yet find hope in unlikely places. In some areas of Nepal, if a parent is sentenced to prison and they lack a guardian for their child, the child is imprisoned with the parent. Many of these children go to prison at a young age and are released to the world at age 18, with no life skills or support system, knowing nothing of the world but what they experienced in a jail cell. In an effort to break this cycle for the children, Butterfly Home was created.

It is Butterfly Home's objective to establish a self-sustaining home for a small group of boys and girls to begin with, and eventually grow to handle the large population of street kids in Nepal. Currently there are nine children—four boys and five girls—who need the security of a home and an education. There are an estimated 50,000 street kids scattered across Nepal in major urban areas. In Kathmandu alone there are some 1,800 street kids—and that number will have grown by 500 to 1,000 more each year.

"I was so tremendously moved by the film and the tireless work of Pushpa to create a haven for abandoned children that I wanted to help any way I could," Neishabori says. "I will never forget the look on producers Susan Sarandon and Pushpa's faces when we presented the gift to them at the Q&A session during the Sedona Film Festival."

That gift paid for a full year of rent for the children at Butterfly Home. It was generous, but not a unique moment for Neishabori, who has a long history of giving back to people in need.

Neishabori's journey in America began when he was only 14-years-old. After spending a year in Los Angeles to better learn English, Neishabori began attending Santa Ana College before going on to Cal State Fullerton for his masters in engineering. His path soon changed, however, when he got a taste for the family business.

"My parents are in the rug business," he explains. "This is actually a sixth generation thing. While I was going to school, I was supporting myself by helping my father import and export rugs in Los Angeles. Every so often we'd get a new shipment and then I'd sell them. After a week or two, we'd close up the warehouse again and I'd go back to school. I became more interested in it and that's when I decided to give up my engineering and actually stick with this family business. In 1987, we opened our first retail shop in Newport Beach, Calif., and in 1995 I moved everything to Arizona. There was just too much traffic—it was getting to me. I lived in Mission Viejo and only had a 10-mile drive, but it was taking me an hour to an hour-and-a-half to get to work."

That moved turned out to be fortuitous for the Valley community. The store offers a wide selection of fine rugs, including antique, transitional, modern, custom, a wide selection of contemporary, and more, and the AZADI Fine Rugs website has a long list of groups that have been served by Neishabori's commitment to helping those less fortunate, both locally and internationally.

"I'm interested more in charitable works that deal with children," he says. "I feel that children are the unheard voice, the voice of tomorrow, if you will. That really touches my soul. One of the things I've been involved with in the last 20

years is called Good Weaves, and the global mission is to eliminate child labor totally in the rug industry. Whenever they come across a factory or center and find that there may be child labor, they move the kids and they house them and they foster them and they give them hope, education until they turn 18, and then they can move on with their lives.

"I'm also involved with Children First Academy in Tempe where they educate homeless kids," Neishabori explains. "We have a program called AZADI Angel and every year we ask our designers and clients if they want to be an AZADI Angel. Last year we had all of our Angels support this school. Each designer gets a Christmas stocking that's made out of rugs and we give them the rules and regulations and they fill them up. There are over 200 students at the school and last year every student got a gift with the help of AZADI Angels. The year prior to that we did similar things with Banner Hospital in Mesa.

"I'm also involved in little communities like Telluride, where we ask the kids between the ages of 5 and 18 what their vision of America is from an artistic point. We invite them to draw them and the finalist gets to design a rug. The student gets \$500, the art teacher gets \$500, and half the proceeds from the sale of the rug goes to the school while the other half is donated to Good Weave."

Like many generous people, Neishabori points to a family member as inspiration for his desire to give back, but a few others also make the list. "I've learned from my grandpa that life was all about giving," he says. As for inspirations? "Mother Teresa comes to mind, Tony Robbins comes to mind. For Mother Teresa as poor as she was, as simple as she was, she gave her heart, and I think that's what made her so powerful and so magical. There was really no agenda; it was so pure, so genuine, so giving. So, that really touches my heart. Tony Robbins has really shown me what giving is all about—true giving with no expectation."

From those inspirations, a deeper understanding of philanthropy has taken hold. "I never understood, but as I've gotten older, I have realized that giving is what life is all about," he says. "I have a personal passion. I feel when we give and it comes genuinely from our heart, that is where true

happiness comes from because there is a gift in giving. And that is what I truly believe life is all about. When we give, there is a special feeling we [get] that we've made a difference in one's life, and one family in one school, and to me that is very fulfilling and very, very joyful."

Though Neishabori is an established business owner with the ability to make a strong financial impact for the causes he supports, he believes that anyone can make a difference.

"Some people say they don't have the money to do good, or they don't have a business, and I say, 'Do whatever you can,'" he explains. "You see someone on the street, and you give a smile. Just simple things like that. If you're not sure, you turn to organizations where you can help, whether it's a school, or an after-school activity. It's not about how we help, it's just that we are doing something about it. There's a saying, 'If we focus, we can create and if we seek it, it will come our way.' If you are really looking to give, it's as simple as a handshake. As long as it comes from our heart, we can give anything, and it's not that hard to do that."

The many organizations that Neishabori has helped are all thankful for his help, including local pediatric hospice and palliative care center Ryan House, which just received a \$25,000 donation from AZADI Fine Rugs. But, his involvement with the anti-child labor group Good Weave is not just something that he supports with philanthropy, but something that he takes very seriously in his business model.

"Our company is Good Weave certified," he says. "In the long run, we put our client's mind at ease that when they are buying a rug, not only are they getting a quality rug, but globally, they are making a huge difference and to me, that's precious. To buy rugs from us—we're creating a legacy to eradicate child labor and to me, at the end of day, it's not about buying or selling a rug, it's about what we stood for and what we created. And to me this legacy that we are creating with our clients and our designers, that's priceless."

AZADI Fine Rugs is located in Scottsdale at 7001 N. Scottsdale Road at Indian Bend, with locations in Sedona; Telluride, Colo.; Jackson Hole, Wyo.; and Kona, Hawaii. [www.azadifinerugs.com](http://www.azadifinerugs.com).



SCOTT DALE | 39 | AUGUST 2014

**“ I HAVE A  
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ALL ABOUT. ”**

