

Spotlight on Michael A. Folkes

We first met Michael A. Folkes in December 2013 while closed for the Christmas holidays. Michael urgently needed to record a video promoting the release of his new book *Driven By Desperation*, the inspirational story of growing up in a poor Jamaican village. He was raised by his grandfather Melbourne, who instilled in him the values of honor and a commitment and faith in God. The story chronicles how he reshaped his life, providing inspiration for others who want to change their lives, as well. Even though our offices were closed, we made arrangements to record his story.

Michael worked on a Caribbean cruise ship when he left Jamaica, and worked hard and long, making excellent contacts. His dedication paid off in 1997 when he founded the M. A. Folkes Company, Inc., a Cincinnati-based pallet manufacturing and logistics company, which is still thriving today - an enormous victory. Michael has also founded the Melbourne & Michael Folkes Foundation, in honor of his grandfather, to give back to his home community of Friendship, Jamaica.

He had Watrous Video meet him in Jamaica at his childhood school, Mount Waddy, to produce a video for the foundation. The goal was to show how core values are being taught to the students there, and how his foundation is helping the school upgrade its facility and provide these students with the best resources available, so they can gain a “step up” toward their own future.

Michael travels to Friendship regularly to reinvigorate the kids with optimism and a “can-do” attitude. His “Mighty in Character” leadership has expanded to focus on both the mental and moral qualities of the young people in educational institutions from elementary to college, where his commanding leadership skills have guided students to possess a “Mighty in Character” lifestyle.

Watrous Video has also travelled to Cincinnati to produce videos for the M. A. Folkes Company, Inc., and to film Michael’s work in the schools there. We were present when the City of Cincinnati proclaimed August 5, 2015 as Michael A. Folkes Day. Michael believes, “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

It is Michael’s intention that the Melbourne & Michael Folkes Foundation will honor his grandfather while helping young people achieve their own success, lead fulfilling lives, and give back to their communities. It has been our privilege to work with Michael toward this goal.

For more information on the Melbourne and Michael Folkes Foundation, Michael’s book *Driven By Desperation*, or to book Michael for a MIC Leader speaking engagement, contact Bettina Short, Public Relations/Marketing Manager @ 513-737-9888 or email: marketing@mafolkes.com