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American Portfolios CEO Returns Post-Fundraiser to Thame Valley to Witness Rebuilding Efforts After 2015 Nepal Earthquakes

HOLBROOK, N.Y. (Dec. 12, 2017) — Following the earthquakes of April and May 2015, [American Portfolios Financial Services, Inc.](#) (AP) CEO Lon T. Dolber pledged to return to Nepal's Thame Valley to witness first-hand the rebuilding efforts that were made possible thanks, in part, to the privately-held independent broker/dealer's [firm-wide fundraiser](#). Since 2015, AP has raised in excess of \$30,000 for the [Thame Sherpa Heritage Fund](#) (TSHF), a U.S. tax exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The ongoing fundraiser is just one of the firm's many Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) missions.

Dolber—accompanied by adventure guide [Skip Horner](#), [Exit 10](#) Advertising Managing Partner David White and jewelry designer [Rebecca Dolber](#)—honored that pledge this year with a trek to the region to climb the Parchamo peak (20,300 feet in the Himalayas) and to visit the village of Thame, which had been subjected to the devastating effects of two major earthquakes and subsequent aftershocks. Upon arriving in Kathmandu, although two years had passed, earthquake damage to structures, such as the temples in Durbar Square, was still plainly evident. While making their ascent from Namche Bazaar to Thame Valley, Dolber and company noted evidence of damage along the trek, including buildings that had been reduced to rubble. Upon arriving in the village of Thame, evidence of rebuilding was apparent; however, there was still much to be done with respect to [medium- and long-term goals](#). Signs of American support were imprinted on coverings stamped with the U.S. insignia that temporarily replaced lost roofing in many of the homes. “If we are going to influence hearts and minds of people from other countries in need, this is one excellent way to do it,” Dolber reflects. “I felt proud to be an American when I saw that stamp.”

“American Portfolios, and friends of AP, made a really significant contribution, which is highly valued by TSHF and by our local beneficiaries,” states [TSHF Treasurer Vanessa Folkerts](#). “We’ve worked with our technical partners, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, also known as ETH Zurich, and a consortium of architects and engineers to find ways to set the right precedent and provide a model of building that other people can replicate when building for themselves.” At Thame’s elevation of 12,440 feet, transporting materials is an expensive and laborious feat; therefore, [reconstruction efforts](#) are made using as much local material as possible. Project reconstruction teams consist of local TSHF board members and participants, technical partners, and local builders and artisans, such as carpenters and painters who are able to preserve the Sherpa tradition.

Along with local stakeholders and representatives from all the different constituencies of Thame Valley, TSHF identified community assets that required rebuilding. A joint decision was made to focus on infrastructure used by everyone in the region, such as the Thame Primary School and dormitory facilities for the monks who live and work at the ancient Thame



monastery, which is part of the cultural heart and soul of Thame Valley. “With most individual homes now rebuilt, the goal is to optimize resources and make sure that community assets don’t get neglected,” Folkerts states of the mission going forward. While Nepal remains exposed to the dangers of seismic activity, it’s TSHF’s priority to safeguard as best they can the Thame Valley region for the future. “Our role, on the one hand, is to provide the community with safer buildings; but, equally importantly, it’s to equip people to build more safely for themselves.”

“The local economy depends a lot on tourism; so, a great thing that people can do, like Lon, is go and visit,” Folkerts recommends. “Go visit Thame Valley, eat and stay at the local family establishments, explore and visit all of the cultural sites. That’s one of the best ways you can help the area sustainably.” Dolber re-affirms this message, saying “There are many other beautiful and breathtaking places to see in Nepal besides the highest Himalayan peak that support the people and the region without necessarily putting Nepalese mountain guides into the kind of object danger that climbing Everest does.”

Philanthropic initiatives, like this one, are in keeping with AP’s CSR mission. AP has a long tradition of partnering with charitable organizations, including [World T.E.A.M. Sports](#) (WTS) and [Virtual Enterprises International](#) (VEI). Of the firm’s commitment to CSR, Dolber imparts, “A corporation has a responsibility to put a part of their capital and resources into the community and hope that their employees to do the same by their influence, which creates a cascading effect.”

Dolber’s love of mountaineering was sparked at the young age of 15 when he scaled Mt. Rainier’s 14,411 feet. From 1970 to the present time, he has made a series of successful climbs, including Mt. Baker, Mount St. Helens, Glacier Peak, Mt. Adams, Mt. Hood and Mt. Olympus, as well as an attempt to scale Denali (Mt. McKinley). In 2007, Dolber participated in a WTS climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro, as part of a team of able-bodied climbers who assisted fellow climbers with emotional and physical challenges; the entire party successfully reached Kilimanjaro’s 19,341-foot summit. Dolber’s commitment to CSR extends to the annual WTS [Adventure Team Challenge](#) (ATC), which is held at the [Center for Discovery](#), located in Harris, N.Y. During the two-day challenge, Dolber and other able-bodied volunteers—many of whom have included AP staff and affiliated colleagues—form teams with developmentally- and physically-challenged athletes to accomplish various sporting events, inclusive of summiting the 4,190-foot Slide Mountain in the Catskills.

Dolber’s connection to Nepal stems back to 2013, when he was part of an expedition to climb Tharpu Chuli, a significant peak in the Annapurna Sanctuary. While revisiting Thame, Dolber connected with his friend and former guide Sherpa Ang Norbu’s family, who welcomed him with warmth and heartfelt praise. Norbu, who had been hired by a separate party to support an expedition to Mt. Everest, was unable to coordinate a meeting during Dolber’s expedition. Dolber’s entire climbing team proudly unfurled a banner with the motto at the Parchamo peak base camp, which lies on the Tesi Lapcha Pass at 18,500 feet. Thereafter, Ang Norbu safely helped the expedition he had been supporting down Everest after a successful summit.



About American Portfolios

Headquartered in Holbrook, N.Y., American Portfolios Financial Services, Inc. (APFS) is a full-service, independent broker/dealer and member firm of FINRA and SIPC, offering a complete range of financial services, including personal financial and retirement planning, securities trading, mutual funds, access to investment research, long-term care planning, insurance products and tax-free investing. Fee-based asset management is offered through its sister subsidiary, American Portfolios Advisors, Inc., (APA), an SEC Registered Investment Advisor. Both entities, along with technology entity American Portfolios Advisory Solutions, LLC, collectively reside under the legal entity American Portfolios Holdings, Inc. (APH). Full-service securities brokerage is available through a clearing firm relationship with Pershing, LLC, a BNY Mellon firm, the securities of which are held on a fully disclosed basis. The company currently serves 809 independent investment professionals located in 372 branch locations throughout the nation. It was named Broker-Dealer of the Year* (Division III) by *Investment Advisor* magazine in 2015, 2016 and 2017, as well as one of the top five Best Small/Mid-Size Company to Work for in the state of New York for 2016 and 2017 by the New York State Society for Human Resources Management (NYS-SHRM) and the Best Companies Group (BCG).

**Based on a poll of registered representatives conducted by Investment Advisor magazine. Broker/dealers rated highest by their representatives are awarded "Broker/Dealer (B/D) of the Year."*

About Thame Sherpa Heritage Fund (TSHF)

TSHF was initiated by Sherpa leaders and supporters to assist in local reconstruction with an eye to long-term value. TSHF is a U.S. 501(c)(3) charitable organization run by Thame leaders young and old, experts and independent advisors to ensure that resources are distributed in an equitable, sustainable and culturally-sensitive manner. TSHF believes that local participation and representation is more important now than ever. The road of rebuilding is long and arduous, and urgently require resources as emergency relief efforts have faded away.

- Web site: <http://www.thamesherpafund.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ThameSherpaHeritageFund>

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