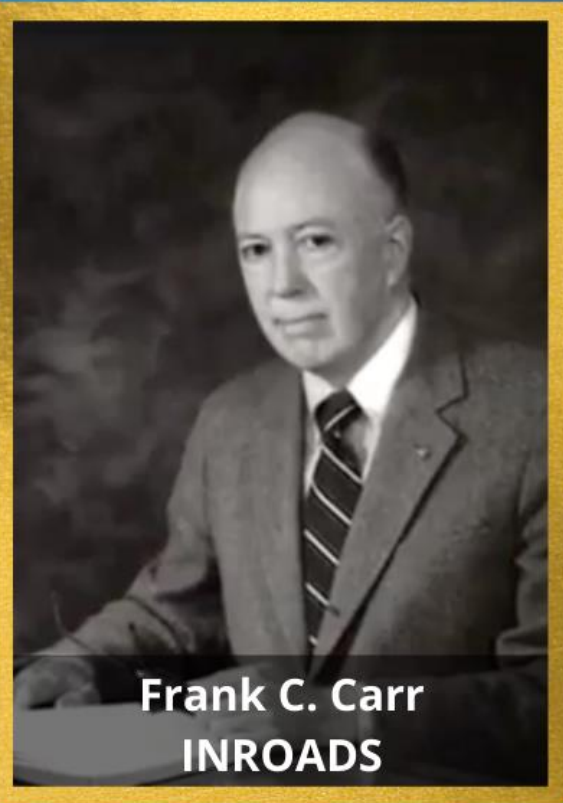
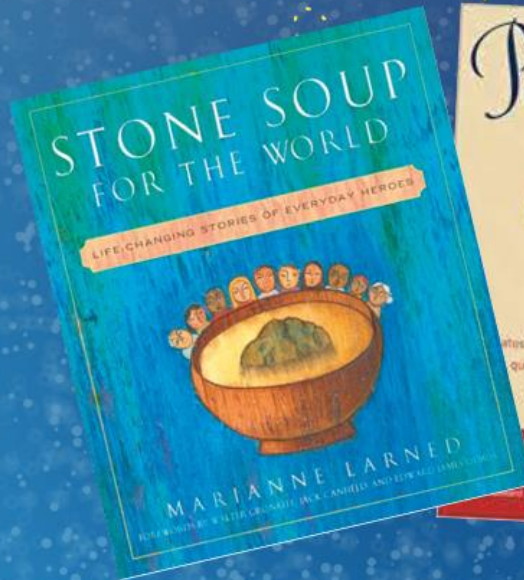


**Fulfilling
Martin's
Dream**

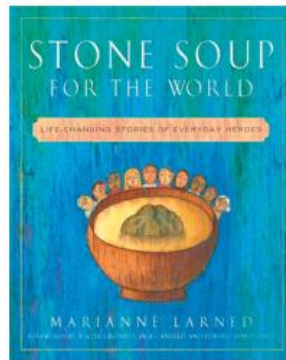


**Frank C. Carr
INROADS**



Story of the Week!

@StoneSoupLeader



FULFILLING MARTIN'S DREAM **Told by Rosalind Barnes**

On the morning of August 18, 1963, Frank Carr got up at 2:00 a.m. to join a bus bound for his nation's capital. This white businessman from Chicago wasn't quite sure why he was going. He'd read about Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and the March on Washington. He'd heard about the call to action for equal rights for all Americans. He just knew he had to go. Later, standing among a quarter of a million other people, he listened to Dr. King's awe-inspiring speech "I Have a Dream!" For the first time in his life, he knew why he was here.

. . . Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all God's children. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. . . . When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

After hearing these words, Frank knew in his heart that he had to do something to help make Martin's dream come true. When he arrived back home, he talked with his friends, people in business, people with

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with influence. He spoke with a new confidence. “There are students in the ghettos and barrios with real talent,” he said. “They can play important roles in our corporations and our communities, if we give them a chance.” Frank urged them to see what they could do.

His friends and colleagues knew he was right. They’d all seen young people with a wealth of potential, who were denied opportunities simply because of the color of their skin. They knew about racism in corporate America, and they decided to see what they could do about it.

The key to their own success had been mentors, people who had taken time to listen to their hopes and dreams, show them the ropes, and introduce them to the “old boys’ network.” So they each made a commitment to mentor one student, and get their companies to place them in summer internships. In 1970 they opened the first INROADS office in Chicago, with seventeen corporate sponsors and twenty-five eager students. “We had no track record, just a dream, and enough people willing to take some risks,” says Carr.

Juan was one of the first twenty-five students. Originally from a small village in Mexico, he had grown up like thousands of boys before him, with very few opportunities. Everyone who knew him would tell you there was something special about Juan.

When he was in the sixth grade, he joined his father, who was working hard in Chicago to improve his family’s life. At first, Juan was thrilled, thinking that in this new world he could accomplish just about anything. On the unfriendly streets of Chicago, however, Juan discovered that life was pretty tough.

Here, he wasn’t special, just another poor Hispanic kid, speaking in broken English. In his Mexican village he had been revered as a leader.

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In Chicago he was an outsider. But despite the difficulties he faced, Juan persevered, something he had learned from his father.

Within three years he graduated with honors from his high school. He was proud to be the first in his family to enter college. But, once again, Juan discovered that reality was less hospitable than he'd imagined. College students were expected to be self-sufficient, and those who struggled with the language or anything else got no special help. Juan did his best, but his first year was rough. Some days he even thought of quitting.

Then, one day, Juan's life took an unexpected step forward. "During my freshman year, I met a remarkable man," he says. "To my surprise, this white man picked me out of the many students passing through a hallway, and said, 'Would you like to intern with a major corporation this summer?'" Juan couldn't believe his ears. "I thought, Summer job? Major corporation? 'Sure. What do I have to do?'"

The man in the hall was Frank Carr. He took Juan under his wing and introduced him to INROADS. That summer, Juan got a great job and, for the first time in his life, opportunities to work with business leaders. "These people became my mentors, showed me the ropes, guided me throughout the summer," he recalls. "They really wanted me to make it in the business world."

That summer's work experience with the Wrigley Corporation convinced Juan that he really could, too. "For the first time since I was a boy in Mexico," he says, "I knew I could be somebody!"

When Juan met Frank, he bore the weight of his family's future on his young shoulders.

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“At the lowest point of my life, Frank gave me the support, encouragement, and financial assistance I needed to finish school.”

Today, Juan is a manager at Wrigley, and has joined the INROADS/Chicago board of directors. Knowing what a difference a mentor made in his life, he’s working with sixth- and seventh-graders of Mexican descent.

Juan will never forget Frank Carr. “His idea is as right today as it was all those years ago,” Juan says. “There is so much talent in our youth. We all need to take the time to harvest it and help them realize their dreams.”

For more than thirty years, INROADS has connected the nation’s brightest young minds with the world’s best companies through salaried internships. Each summer it places nearly seven thousand college students of color in paid positions with Fortune 500 companies in thirty-eight states and Mexico City, Mexico; Toronto, Canada; and Johannesburg, South Africa. And it all started when one man woke up to another man’s dream.

If you are interested in becoming an INROADS student, or if your company would like to learn about sponsoring INROADS students, visit their website, www.INROADS.org.

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