



## **WALLOP!** for San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind

**Doug Cross**

President/CEO

Zulu Investment Corporation

Doug Cross – just the mere mention of his name and ears perk-up...Who is the *fortunate* non-profit Doug Cross is helping today? Everyone in San Antonio knows him as the consummate caring and involved man!

Doug Cross and *generosity* are synonymous and not just for his financial and fundraising acumen – but in the most important way...his gift of time.

To put into words what Doug has meant to the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind (SALB) is tantamount to a near impossibility. We can however, give some background to his rise to fame.

Doug was recruited seven years ago by past SALB CEO, Bob Plunkett, who was in need of a board member of Doug's caliber and networking skills to help shine a much needed "light" on the Lighthouse. Doug worked with Bob until Mike Gilliam took over the CEO/President position in 2006.

At that time, the SALB was in severe financial straits and owed past due bills of over \$13M. Doug and Mike worked undauntedly to turn around and save the Lighthouse, and most importantly save jobs for blind individuals where the unemployment rate is 70%. Incredibly, that hard work and perseverance has paid off and driven that debt down to ZERO!!

Under Doug's and Mike's tutelage, along with the entire Board and SALB Team, the Lighthouse is now solvent with net assets that have risen from nearly nothing to over \$25M.

Seven years later, the SALB has grown from 150 employees to over 500, blind employment is up from 80 to 250, and blind San Antonians served in their Rehabilitation programs has increased from 1200 to 6000 a year.

While morale was at an all-time low when Doug joined the Lighthouse Board, SALB has recently been recognized as one of the “Best Places to Work” in San Antonio by both the *Express-News* and *Business Journal*.

The Board under Doug’s leadership voted to triple the retirement plan for the employees, because he cares so much about them and wanted to make sure they can maintain their standard of living after retiring.

When Doug Cross believes in an organization and their mission, there is no stopping him---he has single-handedly sponsored/recruited 9 of the current 23 Board Members and 20 of the current 48 Leadership Advisory Council Members---not to mention raising over \$1M during his tenure.

Doug became Board Chair in October, 2005 and remained the Chairman of the Board until the end of December, 2010---and is now the Chair of the Leadership Advisory Council...so look out!!!

There is a song that Michael Jackson and the Jackson 5 made famous in 1971 that says it all...“Never can say goodbye / No No No No.”

For sure Doug has packed a HUGE **WALLOP!**

**Wonderful Admirable Leadership Leadership Our Passion**