

# Doing Some Good

The DooGood Conservatory's Ari Evan Gold wants to help skateboards save lives.

Like most skaters, for Ari Evan Gold, skateboarding has always been about more than simply stepping on a deck and rolling around on the pavement—it's been part of his identity, a challenge, a motivator, an educator, a way to stay out of trouble, a dream, and—in short—his life. In the fall of 2002, Gold decided to share his passion for skateboarding with others by founding a nonprofit organization called The DooGood Conservatory.

Created as a way to get underprivileged kids skating, DooGood provides free-to-use skateboards to participating skateparks, as well as distributing free completes to the underprivileged during the holiday season. Logistically, through collected donations, DooGood distributes three boards on a quarterly basis to skateparks participating in the program. The boards are replaced every four months, with the used decks going to deserving kids in a manner determined by each park's director.

Starting with its first skatepark in Tampa, the DooGood program has grown to include fifteen parks nationwide. Locations in California include seven in inner-city Los Angeles, four in San Diego, as well as Grass Valley and Central Cal. There's also a location in Boston, Massachusetts.

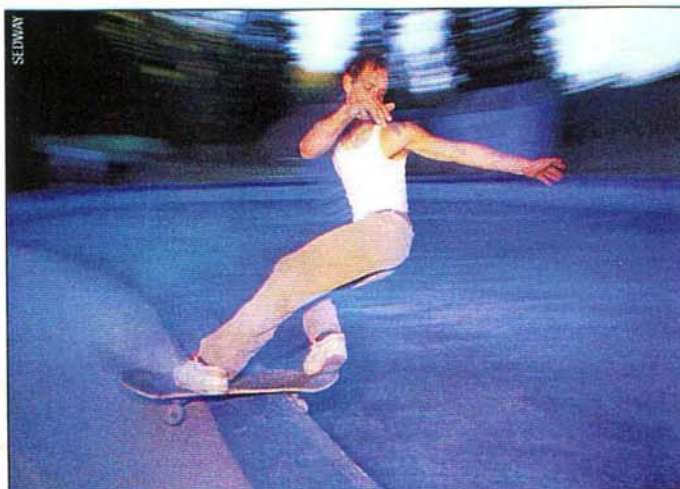
According to Gold, DooGood is off to a great start, but it's nowhere near his goals for the Conservatory. "I go through about 170 skateboards a year," he remarks. "The mission is to have a hundred skateparks going through twelve boards a year—three every four months. That would be 1,200 skateboards a year to complete

phase one of the DooGood mission."

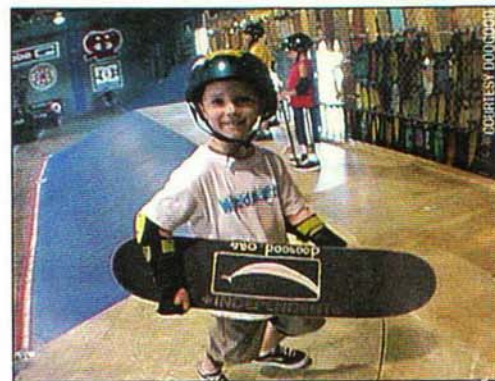
Gold says in order to grow the skate program and eventually move into its second and third phases—which would move the Conservatory's reach into surfing and snowboarding—a lot more funding is needed. As a nonprofit with 501c3 tax status, all materials and cash donated to the DooGood Conservatory are 100-percent tax deductible. Even so, Gold is doing much of the work himself.

"The difficulty I've had is getting funding to run the programs right now," he says. "All the shipping, boxing, and work I do myself. All the money to pay for everything comes out of my budget earned as a waiter. All the boards are put together by me, I stencil all of them, and I ship them, box them, and keep track of everything."

Blitz Distribution was the first company to donate 250 decks to the Conservatory, and since then things have arrived in spurts. Independent and its distributor NHS have up to this point been the Conservatory's largest contributor—and only truck benefactor. It's donated



DooGood founder Ari Evan Gold.



A grom named Brandon skates with a DooGood smile.

helmets, bearings, wheels, trucks, griptape, and hardware. Other endemic donations have come from Dwindle, Tum Yeto, ABC Board Supply, Zero Skateboards, and Girl/Chocolate. In addition to skate equipment, however, DooGood is always in need of less exciting donations like banners, booth space, money, and other people's time.

"Right now, it's still pretty much a one-man show," laughs Gold. "I have a lot of volunteers and donations on so many levels—but we're so underfunded."

"On some levels, it would probably be cheaper for me to simply buy blanks and put DooGood on them," Gold continues. "I think the industry is getting back from this brand recognition. For a lot of kids who need something, sports can become a kind of mentor and home. This equipment is that mentor. Kids are finding a support group and friends from skateboarding. DooGood wants to help them do that."

—Leah Stassen

For more information on The DooGood Conservatory, visit [www.doogood.org](http://www.doogood.org)