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Beyond Sport invites globalbike to summit

London event to hail efforts to send bikes to caregivers in developing countries

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This summer, a Spartanburg nonprofit will be in elite company, which will include Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu, Sir Richard Branson and Tony Blair.

Globalbike, a nonprofit established to provide bicycles for teachers and caregivers in developing countries, has been selected to attend the Beyond Sport Summit in London July 7-9. The organization is one of 35 in the world selected for attendance and the only group from the United States, besides the National Basketball Association.

Globalbike also is being considered for Beyond Sport's best project by a professional sports team for how it is using a professional cycling team to spread the word about the nonprofit.

"I think when you believe in something as strongly as we believe in globalbike, you always feel like you've got a shot," said Curt McPhail, one of the founding members of the nonprofit, which intentionally lowercases its name.

Beyond Sport is a global initiative that celebrates inspirational sports projects seeking to create change. Its summit will include leadership development training for individuals and organizations, as well as opportunities to meet high-profile people involved in sports and government. The summit also will include discussions with Tutu, Branson and Blair.

"It's a huge opportunity to get in front of people who could spring globalbike along," McPhail said.

Globalbike was started by five friends who met at a local coffee shop three years ago and thought about sending bikes to developing countries. They've sent more than 300 bikes to those countries. Globalbike started with Zambia and has added Tanzania and Ethiopia. The nonprofit is starting to send bikes to veterinarians in Bolivia.

Globalbike gives individuals an opportunity to purchase bikes and receive photos and stories about the recipient of its bikes.

The nonprofit also established a partnership with a professional cycling team. The team wears globalbike jerseys and sets up tables with information about the organization at races around the country.

"This isn't about us or the team," McPhail said. "It's about the caregivers in Ethiopia, Bolivia and Tanzania riding our bikes every day."

Beyond Sport will pay for airfare, lodging and summit registration fees for one globalbike person. The nonprofit would like to send at least two more people to the summit and is considering hosting a fundraiser. The group also is looking for donations of frequent flyer miles and money.
