Maya Ajmera, Social Entrepreneur in Residence and Senior Advisor on Social Entrepreneurship

Maya is the founder and was the president for 18 years of The Global Fund for Children, a non-profit that invests in innovative, community-based organizations working with some of the world’s most vulnerable children and youth. GFC has awarded more than $28 million in capital to nearly 500 grassroots organizations in 78 countries, touching the lives of over 7 million children. She is an award winning children's book author of over 15 titles; her work includes Children from Australia to Zimbabwe, Faith, To Be a Kid and most recently Healthy Kids (with a foreword by Melinda French Gates '86) with over 4 million readers worldwide. She founded and incubated The Global Fund for Children at Duke University as a graduate student in public policy.

Maya is a recipient of numerous leadership awards including the 2011 Henry Crown Fellowship at the Aspen Institute and 1993 Echoing Green Social Entrepreneurship Fellowship. She is sought out nationally and internationally to address audiences on local and global philanthropy, global children’s rights, international development, and social entrepreneurship. Her work and life story have been profiled by such media outlets as CNN, The Oprah Winfrey Show, Financial Times, NPR, and many others.

Maya co-chairs the board of Echoing Green, the premier venture capital fund for early-stage social entrepreneurs, a trustee of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics and a board member of New Global Citizens and Kids in Need of Defense. She received a master's degree in public policy from the Sanford School of Public Policy ('93) where she serves on school's board of visitors, and a bachelor's degree in biology from Bryn Mawr College.