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Erin Barylski, Rick Smith Jr. and Margaret Bobonich describe how TV fame changed their lives

by [Julie E. Washington/Plain Dealer Reporter](#)

Friday January 23, 2009, 12:00 AM

Magician Rick Smith, Jr.

CLEVELAND — Sometimes people enjoy 15 minutes of fame soon are gone, never to be heard from again. Others bask and stretch those minutes into hours.

Here's a snapshot of three Northeast Ohioans who gained fame from television appearances and who say the experience affected their lives in positive ways.

MARGARET BOBONICH

Margaret Bobonich has barely paused for breath since returning home from "Survivor: Guatemala" in 2005.

She leads medical missions to Guatemala, started a new nursing program at Case Western Reserve University, works on her doctorate and does motivational speaking.

For several years Bobonich, 47, of Chardon, has headed teams of doctors and nurse practitioners from the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at CWRU to a village outside Guatemala City. They are the only doctors the villagers ever see; diabetes, gastrointestinal problems, polio and heart disease are rampant, she said.

In 2007 she left private practice and took a job as a dermatology nurse practitioner at University Hospitals Case Medical Center. There she started a program that trains nurse practitioners in dermatology. The specialty is needed because of the rising skin-cancer rates, she said.

"Survivor" gave her the motivation to do it all. She feels her experiences on the show are a blessing, and that she has a responsibility to make the world a little better.

"Giving back is what we're expected to do," Bobonich said.



Courtesy Margaret Bobonich

"Survivor: Guatemala" contestant Margaret Bobonich of Chardon, a nurse practitioner, has returned to Guatemala to provide medical care to villagers.

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