

## ***“Better by Design”***

November 19, 2010  
12:30 - 2:00pm  
Room 7-431

### **Timothy Prestero**

CEO, Design that Matters

#### *Abstract*

Better by Design: how empathy leads to better innovations for the poor

Design is powerful technique for solving problems. This presentation will discuss the advantages and limitations of design as a tool for social transformation, describing some lessons learned in Design that Matters' work applying this methodology to the creation of new products and services to meet the needs of the poor. The presentation will describe the difference between "technology push" and "customer pull," and demonstrate how the latter is a consequence of the design approach. The presentation will introduce specific techniques we have developed to determine real user needs and to define the user context. The presentation will also describe the pitfalls of "special case" thinking in evaluating efforts to create social benefits.

#### *Bio*

Timothy Prestero is the founder and CEO of Design that Matters (DtM), a 501c3 nonprofit based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. DtM collaborates with leading social entrepreneurs and hundreds of volunteers to design new products and services for the poor in developing countries. A former Peace Corps volunteer and MIT graduate, Tim has worked in West Africa, Latin America and Asia. He is a Martin Fellow at the MIT Laboratory for Energy and the Environment, a Draper Richards Fellow, and was named an Ashoka Affiliate in 2004. His awards include the 2007 Social Venture Network Innovation Award, and the 2009 World Technology Award. DtM's work received an honorable mention in the ID Magazine's 2010 Annual Design Review, and the company was a finalist in Corporate Achievement for the 2010 National Design Award.