

Rodney Mullen

If you Google *Godfather of Modern Street skating*, Rodney Mullen pops up because he invented the majority of tricks in today's skateboarding and is the most dominant champion in the sport's history. This put Rodney in the public eye since his teenage years, which includes film, documentaries, TV and videogames as well as profiles in outlets such as the New Yorker, Forbes, Rolling Stone, Esquire, and the Wall Street Journal. More notable is how this same drive and creativity translated to success in business, applied science, and technology. The next sections evince how the unusual integration of seemingly unrelated expertise and relationships align with the excellence and goals of the C4 Foundation to further its mission in wholistic ways.

Science: Rodney is a Fellow at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's prestigious Media Lab and was appointed by the Smithsonian as a Distinguished Research Scholar. Studying chemical engineering at UF, he was recruited into the honorary math society Pi Mu Epsilon as its singular exception, given his unusual mathematical aptitude. He's cowritten papers and contributed to multiple studies on optimizing human performance, neuroscience, resilience, and creativity for the National Academy of Sciences, Institute for Creative Technologies, and more. He's spoken at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab, Doolittle (an Air Force Research Institute), *BrainMind* at both MIT and Stanford, USC's *Iovine & Yonge Academy*, and UVA Medical School. In 2023, he was asked to address the British Royal Society in London.

Business: Rodney co-founded the largest and most lucrative skateboard company throughout the 90's, culminating in its partial sale by 1998, then a complete sale in 2001. Under that umbrella, he launched multiple brands with other pro skaters to help them transition skillsets honed as athletes to business; many of them dominate the industry today. He holds two patents and is widely credited for modern board and wheel design. Given his influence on culture and business, he's presented for Nike, Deutsche Telecom, Greylock, The Smithsonian, and Wired Magazine's BizCon. More recently, Senior Lecturer of Strategy at UCI's Paul Merage School of Business hailed Rodney's presentation with RAND's Ann Pendleton-Jullian as one of its finest.

Technology: After selling his business, he found Linux Open-Source computing to be a blend of skate culture and engineering; in only a few years, Rodney connected concepts that ushered him to the TED stage; soon afterwards, he was recruited into elite gatherings in Silicon Valley, such as FoO Camp at Google X and Facebook. Since 2013, he's presented for IBM, Apple, and myriad Data and DevOps conferences. VM-Ware's CTO was so taken by one presentation that they collaborated on a project yielding insight into a nexus between AI and creativity, even publishing a paper together. He has also cofounded an Augmented Reality company in 2018 which has already been nominated for multiple awards and works closely with Niantic and Apple.

Rodney still skates two hours every day.