

action takes root

YouthActionNet® BRAZIL
Iniciativa Jovem Anhambí Morumbi (Iam)
Launched: 2008, Fellows to date: 20

YouthActionNet® MEXICO
Premio UVM por El Desarrollo Social (Premio UVM)
Launched: 2006, Fellows to date: 45

YouthActionNet® SPAIN
*Premios Universidad Europea de Madrid
Jovenes Emprendedores Sociales*
Launched: 2008, Fellows to date: 10

IYF's Global Youth Leadership Program Goes Local

By
SHEILA
KINKADE

Since 2001, with support from Nokia, IYF's YouthActionNet® program has provided 140 youth leaders from 55 countries with critical leadership training and practical skill-building to help them build the capacity of their own nonprofit organizations. Today, this highly successful global program is taking root at a national level, offering potentially hundreds more young leaders in their own countries the skills, opportunities and recognition to drive change in their communities.

RICH, CREAMY, MOUTH-WATERING CHOCOLATE.

No matter where you live, it's a cherished commodity. For Raúl Armando López Garcés, 24, chocolate is also a tool for helping Mayan women in Mexico rise out of poverty. Raúl founded Chocolate Maya, a social enterprise, to train and equip low-income women to make artisanal, organic chocolates. Their creations are now tickling the taste buds of consumers throughout the nation and beyond.

Similarly, 28-year-old Camila Forero came up with the idea of training Roma women in Madrid, Spain, to make fashionable apparel out of discarded clothing and fabric. Camila knew that these women, long alienated by society, possess a gift for working with a needle and thread. Through her *Romihilo* initiative, Camila has helped more than 60 women pursue a path toward gainful employment.

Both of these young social entrepreneurs were selected in 2008 as National YouthActionNet Fellows in their respective countries. A program of the International Youth Foundation, YouthActionNet works—globally, nationally and virtually—to support young leaders and their innovative approaches to solving urgent challenges. In Brazil, Mexico and Spain, IYF has joined with the Sylvan/Laureate Foundation and the Laureate International Universities network to create national youth leadership institutes.

Youth social entrepreneurship is fast gaining attention and support. According to Douglas L. Becker, Chairman and CEO of Laureate Education, Inc., “Many of the Laureate-supported YouthActionNet social entrepreneurs have found creative and effective solutions to local and global social challenges. These young innovators combine a deep commitment to their communities with a results-oriented focus on their work, which yields remarkable results.”

Celebrating Brazilian Youth

In Brazil, the local YouthActionNet institute, known as the *Anhembi Morumbi Youth Initiative (Iam)*, is run by Anhembi Morumbi University. Since it was launched in 2008, Iam has to date honored 20 young social entrepreneurs throughout greater São Paulo. Fellows complete 250 hours of training over four months in areas such as business plan development, project management and communications. They are also eligible to receive monetary awards.

In just a short time, the Iam Fellows have inspired dozens of university students and professors to get involved in their projects. Young graphic designers are helping with communications materials; film students are producing videos of the Iam Fellows. Professors from various departments—marketing, business and communications—also contribute their time as trainers, with the university covering their salaries as part of its social-responsibility mandate.

“We’re extremely pleased with the way Iam



Fellows are mobilizing the school community,” says Mauricio Homma, the university’s Social Responsibility Coordinator. “Participants in these projects not only produce a tangible social benefit but have fun working as a team toward a shared goal.”

One university class adopted a project led by 27-year-old Iam Fellow Paula Monteiro Takida. Paula launched *Favela Attitude* to promote a spirit of social responsibility among youth growing up in the Real Parque and Jardim Panorama slums. Since 2004, the youth have hosted cultural activities—incorporating documentary videos, hip-hop music and dance—that have reached more than 8,000 community members. Anhembi Morumbi University students have assisted Paula’s project with brand management and website development.

An Entrepreneurial Ripple Effect

“It’s a win-win for the universities and the Fellows,” says IYF Program Manager Karen Phillips. “Students studying communications, for example, have the chance to apply what they’re learning in real-life settings and to contribute to social change in the communities where they live. Fellows benefit from specialized expertise at no cost.”

In 2009, additional YouthActionNet Institutes are planned for Australia, Haiti and Israel. Through national and global Fellowship programs, YouthActionNet seeks to train and support more than 1,000 young social entrepreneurs globally over the next five years. **Y**

Sheila Kinkade is Marketing and Communications Manager at the International Youth Foundation.

Raúl Armando López Garcés (above left), 24, started Maya Chocolate, a social enterprise, to help low-income women in Mexico rise out of poverty.

PHOTO BY
RÁUL ARMANDO
LÓPEZ GARCÉS

Starbucks: Investing in Today's Young Leaders



With support from the Starbucks Foundation, Unite For Sight is training villagers in Ghana to serve as eye health workers.



Low-income children in Haiti (top) receive meals and educational support through the Last Best Hope project, founded by 2008 YouthActionNet Fellow John Miller Beauvoir.

Out-of-school youth in Melaka, Malaysia (above), learn key life skills through the SOLS training center, a Starbucks grant recipient.

PHOTOS BY JOHN MILLER BEAUVOIR, JENNIFER STAPLE, RAJ RIDVAN SINGH

JOHN MILLER BEAUVOIR, AGE 26, STARTED the “Last Best Hope” project in Haiti to provide disadvantaged children with classes on civic education, environmental awareness and healthy living.

“Our goal is to break the cycle of illiteracy that plagues our communities and to help young people become active citizens,” says John. “We’re setting an example of what young people can achieve when they decide to take action.”

Now, with support from the Starbucks Foundation, John is expanding his efforts to reach 300 additional children on the Haitian island of Gonâve.

John is among 25 young leaders in 17 countries to receive grants through the Starbucks Foundation, which has pledged to support young people taking action in their local communities through its Starbucks™ Shared Planet™ commitment to communities. The

grantees were chosen through a competition launched in 2008 by IYF and the Starbucks Foundation in order to make grants available to young leaders who have completed IYF’s YouthActionNet Global Fellowship [see pages 24–25].

Another grant recipient, 2004 YouthActionNet Global Fellow Jennifer Staple, founded Unite for Sight (UFS) to improve eye health and eliminate preventable blindness around the world. UFS is using its US\$15,000 grant from the Starbucks Fund to train villagers in Ghana to serve as eye health workers, who in turn will reach 86,000 patients annually.

Ranging from US\$5,000–\$15,000, the Starbucks grants total more than \$300,000. To learn more about the Starbucks Foundation’s commitment to supporting young people making positive change, visit: www.youthactionnet.org and www.starbucksfoundation.com/sef. SK