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FORGING CONNECTIONS

*“Respect Is A
Lingering Catalyst
For Our Journey.”*

*– Sammy Mayer,
IPM Co-Foundress*

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“Respect Is A Lingering Catalyst For Our Journey.” – Sammy Mayer, IPM Co-Foundress

The following reflection was written by IPM CEO Joe Cistone at the time of Sammy Mayer's passing. It has been edited and updated for inclusion here in this special commemorative 45th Anniversary edition of Connections. The title of this piece is taken from Sammy's writing in 2005. She wrote the following words about her vision for IPM — they are as powerful and relevant to IPM's mission and the world in which we live today as they were then.

“In contemplating where I am, in this spiritual journey, I feel at peace. In fulfilling this blessing of ‘neighborliness,’ even to my enemy, my attitude is different than it was. I don’t see my Muslim sister as ‘other’, but one on a journey with me, with whom I can hold hands and say, together we can make a difference in this place...how we can together, people of faith in a God who cares, bring solace and help...how we can together show love and solidarity. She may speak of her faith and I of mine, but we will know that RESPECT IS A LINGERING CATALYST FOR OUR JOURNEY.”

One of the most difficult aspects of my role with IPM is to share the sad news of those members of the IPM Family who pass away during my tenure. I have done this all too often but rarely with the sense of deep personal loss as this time.

As many of you know by now—through personal relationship with the Mayer family, my related email of last Sunday, and the moving tribute from IPM's Latin America & Caribbean Office—IPM Foundress Sammy Mayer passed away peacefully with her family beside her Sunday morning October 6, at the age of 94. Sammy is survived by her eight children, their families, and a host of loved ones she called her family. She certainly was family to me.

Anyone who was in Sammy's presence was unable to not be touched by her. I have had the privilege to know thousands of activists, faith leaders, and social change agents during my lifetime and few could rival her commitment, courage, and passion. She was a mentor, friend, and my “Saint Louis Mother.” We spent countless late nights together discussing IPM's direction and praying for guidance together as IPM sought to deepen and expand the vital mission Sammy helped birth alongside her beloved Jim after years spent together in service among the people of India.

Sammy was a forceful woman of unmistakable talent who was in some ways born too soon. She was brilliant, fearless, radical in the best sense, and honest to the

core. I often joked with her that had she been born closer to my time, she would have been the perfect leader for IPM, if not a much-needed prophetic Bishop in her beloved ELCA denomination!

Born when she was, she found the perfect partner for her passions in Jim and helped set IPM's vision and direction in the more than three decades since his tragic death. She served the IPM International Executive Board faithfully as a Director and Trustee Emeritus, was a driving force behind IPM's Saint Louis Advisory Council, traveled to El Salvador with IPM and her son Jim in 2006, was a founding member of my “kitchen cabinet,” and, welcomed countless IPM Project Partners and International Staff Members to her Saint Louis home.

Her death took me and many by surprise. Frankly, I am still coming to terms with what her passing means for me and the IPM Family, but I feel her spirit guiding and inspiring us in all we do. We lost a remarkable woman who was a source of deep and consistent inspiration. Every time she began to speak at an IPM gathering the room went quiet. It was as if the world stood still and God's Divine Spirit was there among us, speaking through Sammy, with a vision for the way the world—and IPM—ought to be.

I learned of her death while celebrating worship among my Faith Community. Sammy “had my back” as IPM transitioned from an Ecumenical to Multi-Faith organization during my tenure. We shared

a deep sense of how those who claim to follow Jesus of Nazareth are called to live at a time when many who profess Christianity are rightly mocked for living and speaking in complete contradiction to what Jesus taught and how he lived.

Literally at the moment the text came telling me of Sammy's passing we were singing the song “Who Is My Mother?” which speaks clearly to the values of the Abrahamic traditions, Buddhism, Hinduism, and so many other spiritual traditions. “Who is my mother, who is my brother... Spirit blown people...differently abled, differently labeled...crutches and stigmas, culture's enigmas...Love will relate us—color or status, can't segregate us...family failings, human derailings... all are accepted...bound by one vision, met for one mission...we claim each other...here is my mother, here is my brother, kindred in Spirit...” Words that are the perfect description of the type of justice, righteousness, and shalom to which Sammy dedicated her life and which IPM seeks to cultivate in all we do.

Some people are simply irreplaceable. Sammy was certainly one of those unique souls. I will miss her as long as I live. I recall that beautiful twinkle in her eye, feel the transcendent compassion of her heartfelt greetings, and hear her purposeful voice leading me on, as together we imagine IPM's continued, vital role in the world.

May the peace that passes all understanding be with all of you as you join me in mourning the death of this remarkable woman. May we be blessed with the continued courage to hold firm to the truth that Sammy embodied in all we do and whenever we utter her beloved name.

In faith and love, Joe

Joseph F. Cistone
Chief Executive Officer

ON THE COVER: Sammy Mayer, IPM Co-Foundress

Board Profile – Xenia Chevez

Xenia is a member of IPM's International Executive Board and currently serves as the Regional Vice Chair for Latin America & the Caribbean

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND:

Early in my professional career, I was a volunteer teacher in secondary education and an adult education program. I am a nutritionist by profession. I have dedicated myself to promoting community health throughout five departments (states) in Nicaragua. I specialize in alternative therapies of holistic medicine. I did my professional work in Applied Community Nutrition coordinating SISVAN (Nutrition Surveillance Systems) at the national level with the WFP (World Food Program) and MINSA (Nicaragua Ministry of Health), serving children under the age of five.

I worked as a consultant for socio-economic studies of ethnic groups in the autonomous Atlantic region, with Kepa Finland, Diagnosis of the Food Situation - Nutritional with the FACS (Fundación Augusto César Sandino), and as Coordinator of the Nutrition and Natural Medicine Program in Woman and Community Free San Francisco.

I complemented my work experiences in small business management, which allowed me to coordinate the economic projects with thirty women of the same organization. As I finished professional courses in "Systemic Approach to Project Management" and "Women's Economic Empowerment" at the University of Women Meeting Point twelve years ago, I founded the nonprofit Ceprosi Women's Association with other colleagues. I currently serve as Coordinator and Facilitator, implementing gender-inclusive development projects in five Nindiri-Masaya communities.

PERSONAL LIFE STATEMENT/MISSION:

At the end of high school, my school sent me to provide my social services cutting coffee in rural areas of Matagalpa. During my stay, I was with a family in a situation that completely impacted my life; a young woman's 10-month-old son was in a state of starvation. I knew her drastic poverty and vulnerable condition as a woman; something that surpassed the level of poverty that I lived in my childhood with my parents of humble origin.



Xenia Chevez in Nicaragua



IPM Board Meeting November 2019 at longtime Community Partner, Forest Hill Presbyterian Church, Cleveland Heights, OH

I understood the injustices experienced by those in poverty, the inequalities and social exclusion that lose the value of hope, and the injustices of abandoning the poor in their poverty and marginalization. This guided my vocation, a priority and urgency to break with this vicious cycle of hunger and poverty with a woman's face.

Since then, my job is a grateful service and opportunity to give as much as I have received. Now at *CEPROSI*, we continue these efforts for women, families, youth and community to promote life, their rights and dignity. We are convinced that this change is possible from the people and the work we do from the collective. As Howard Zinn says, "We make a difference in small actions and that where some form of injustice has been repaired, it has been because people have acted as citizens."

SKILLS/INTERESTS I BRING TO IPM:

I bring to IPM organizational, participatory-community experience and collective skills in monitoring local development funds. I am excited about the implementation of the new partnership model in consensus with other people defining the path that allows us to strengthen IPM, Projects Partners, managers, friends, collaborators and generous people that contribute to making IPM's work possible.

WHERE IPM SHOULD BE HEADING:

IPM in its transformative organization, that with firm commitment to projects, empowers and gives a true sense of belonging to women, girls, youth and communities. IPM should continue providing opportunities of training in different skills and competences so that every person inside a community can continue to create, undertake, and act for their own development and flourish in a dignified way.

I am greatly motivated by the new governance structure, allowing other Partner members to be integrated, enabling us to know Project Partner needs and priorities in order to design and implement better solutions.

MY HOPE FOR IPM:

I hope IPM continues to plant seeds of love and hope for the most vulnerable, and to bear fruit of well-being, peace, and justice in many lives.

The increase of Immersion Experiences, because it allows true encounters between people, providing a sense of unity and harmony, beyond the borders.

I see IPM setting as a model of effective and lasting partnership with Project Partners around the region and implantation of a revolving loan program.

FAMILY AND HOBBIES:

My greatest blessings are my family and my parents that I still enjoy very much. My spouse, William, is a theologian and therefore my spiritual life is strengthened in the spaces we share together from his passionate and selfless pastoral and social exercise. He is my great friend and ally, his support has been unconditional, as the co-founder of *CEPROSI* and throughout the life of the organization. We have two extraordinary daughters; Wendy, 21, is finishing the last year of her career in international relations, and Gilliam, 12, is starting her high school studies this year.

I like healthy food, my favorite herb is spinach leaves, although I'm not a good cook. I love plants and I also grow them, I like to listen to music, especially folklore. I also like to dance to it. I always look forward to going to Masaya to enjoy the marimba (a Latin-American instrument). 🌍

*Xenia Chevez,
IPM's International Executive Board
Member and Regional Vice Chair for Latin
America & the Caribbean*

IPM Annual Luncheon Celebrates Northeast Ohio's Commitment to Environmental Justice

On November 13, 2019, IPM's Annual Luncheon at Tremont Cityside Ballroom (Cleveland) addressed Northeast Ohio's commitment to environmental justice and the ways our current global reality is impacting IPM Project Partners. The luncheon featured a panel discussion on Environmental Justice entitled: The Disproportional Effects of Climate Change on Community Development Across Borders. The panel consisted of a cross cultural conversation between Cleveland community leaders and IPM's Regional Directors from El Salvador and India.



Annual Award Luncheon 2019 at Tremont Cityside Ballroom



IPM Annual Award Luncheon 2019



Case Western Reserve University's Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences LINK students and Director Kim McFarlin at the Annual Award Luncheon 2019



Linda Panther and GINN Academy students at the Annual Award Luncheon 2019



Luncheon Panelists and Moderator from left to right: David Beach, Destinee Henton, Mahesh Upadhyaya, and Adela Zayas at the Annual Award Luncheon 2019

2019 HONOREES:

Reverend Richard E. Sering Award:

Paul Neundorfer, Co-Founder of The Refugee Response



Paul Neundorfer pictured third from left with The Refugee Response Team

David N. Westcott Outstanding

Volunteer Award: Anne Sowell, Longtime IPM Volunteer also volunteers her time at MetroHealth NICU Unit



Anne Sowell receiving her award at the Annual Award Luncheon 2019

Kathleen T. Mink Project Partner

Award: Arthumka Community Development Program, Nepal



Mahesh Upadhyaya (pictured third from left), Regional Director, South Asia received award on Arthumka's behalf

Annual Saint Louis **Donor Appreciation Luncheon** on May 10, 2019

Celebrating 45 Years As A Catalyst For Inspiring Change, Social Justice, & Equity

IPM was delighted to begin our series of celebratory 45th Anniversary events in Saint Louis, Missouri, the city of our founding where it all began on May 10, 1974!

Held in conjunction with IPM's International Executive Board meeting, we were grateful to celebrate this milestone occasion at our Annual Luncheon surrounded by IPM's long-standing friends and cherished supporters. We were particularly humbled this year to recognize our 2019 Honorees: Emily Egan, Larry Sehy, and the fourteen children and families of IPM Co-Founders, Jim & Sammy Mayer and Paul & Vercile Strege, for their unwavering dedication, faith, and inspiring support to IPM's mission nurturing justice, peace, and hope in our world. 🌍



2019 Honorees Emily Egan & Larry Sehy (above left) and members of the Mayer-Strege Families at IPM's 45th Anniversary Celebration in Saint Louis, Missouri, May 10, 2019



IPM's Annual Saint Louis Donor Appreciation Luncheon included an engaging and powerful panel discussion with local community partners and friends reflecting on their experience working to be catalysts for inspiring change, social justice, and equity in today's challenging political climate.



2019 Honorees: The fourteen children and families of IPM Co-Founders Jim & Sammy Mayer and Paul & Vercile Strege.

Nurturing Hope for a World Grounded in Justice and Love

Charting IPM's Strategic Direction and Goals for 2019-2022

IPM's October 8-12, 2018 II General Assembly (IGA) in Cleveland was a reminder of just how much is possible when we are able to spend time together, face-to-face and hand-in-hand. Whether we hailed from South Asia or Sub Saharan Africa, the Americas or Europe, we knew (and know!) that the world needs just the sort of person-to-person connection that IPM has been nurturing for 45 years.

Held in conjunction with IPM's 44th Anniversary, this quadrennial gathering of IPM's International Board, Project Partners, Staff, Community Partners, Donors, and Friends engaged thousands of people across the globe for a week-long series of powerful community events, educational programming, and Strategic Planning sessions to chart our direction as we plan for the future. Co-hosted by the Cleveland City Club and a number of local academic and community partners, the IGA included a series of internal discussion and public forums across our community focusing upon environmental justice, human trafficking, inter-faith cooperation, protecting the human rights of women and girls, racial justice, and refugee and migration issues. Each of these topics holds crucial importance to IPM's work, as well as for each of us, an interconnected global community.

Thank you to all our remarkable IGA Delegates, Friends, Program Participants, and Sponsors who generously shared their time, talents, extraordinary commitment, and support as we continue to refine, strengthen, and chart IPM's strategic direction and goals for 2019-2022.

Perhaps no area has seen as much growth and more ably allowed IPM to live out our vision of global solidarity through accompaniment than IPM's signature Immersion Experience Program. Since the program's beginning in 2003, more than 2,268 persons have traveled with IPM on more than 251 immersions to Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, India, Italy, Kenya, Nepal, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Uganda, among the Shoshone and Wabanki Peoples, and across the USA. 🌍



During the II IGA, IPM partnered once again (as we do monthly) with The City Club of Cleveland, the Cleveland Council on World Affairs, Global Cleveland and others for The Happy Dog Forum on Migration Stories from El Salvador, Nicaragua, and the USA. The forum featured a compelling conversation on why the maintenance of DACA & Temporarily Protected Status is so crucial to IPM's Project Partners. As part of our IGA programming, IPM Board Member Xenia Chevez and IPM Regional Director for Latin America & the Caribbean Fatima Pacas offered their powerful perspectives on this topic.



IPM's II International General Assembly delegates and friends gather for our concluding session at the Amistad Chapel, United Church of Christ headquarters.



IGA Panel Respondents at The Cleveland Foundation explored "The Impact of Engagement" highlighting a number of cross-border partnerships between Northeast Ohio philanthropic partners and Project Partners around the world.




IGA Panel on Transformative Travel Around the World: Deryck Toles (Inspiring Minds, Warren, OH), Rodrigo de Castro Amede Peret OFM (Pastoral Land Commission, BRASIL), Mary Ann Corrigan Davis (Saint Joseph Academy, Cleveland), Jim Keane (Saint Joseph School, CT), Mahesh Upadhyaya (INDIA), Selina Pagan (Cleveland, OH), Jamie Sheffler (the Dudley P. & Barbara K. Sheffler Family Foundation, OH), Hank Doll (The Doll Family Foundation, OH), and Joe Cistone.



IPM was thrilled to welcome internationally acclaimed writer, film producer, and social justice activist Oscar Torres as the IGA keynote speaker at Case Western Reserve University's Jack, Joseph, & Morton Mandel Community Center on October 10, 2018. Mr. Torres described life as a child living through the El Salvadoran war in the 1980s. Through his biographical film "Innocent Voices" (2005), a film that went on to win over 70 national and international awards, Oscar's story brings to light the question so often asked in the midst of our current political climate in America: What causes a refugee crisis, and what is our role in it all? Above photo, Oscar (front right) with IPM Board, Staff, & Project Partners.

Celebrating Northeast Ohio's Commitment to Global Partnerships **Building Justice, Peace, and Hope** Around the World

Attendees enjoyed a fabulous evening of international cuisine, a panel discussion, local vendors, live music, live performances, and silent auction.

IPM was proud to host a panel focused on international women and business: International Women and Business with a Purpose. The panel consisted of inspiring women who spoke on overcoming cultural barriers and promoting cultural awareness in Cleveland, OH. The panel was moderated by Marcia Moreno, CEO of AmMore LLC., the first Cleveland-based company dedicated to helping organizations diversify their workforce by creating strategies to attract, recruit and retain Latinx talent to thrive and succeed in Greater Cleveland. The invited panelists included Lucia Gutierrez, founder of Echeri International, Shemariah Arki, Founder of the Ellipsis Institute for Women of Color, Cynthia Connelly, Development Director for Ohio Policy Matters, and Swathi Twaddell, founder of Cleveland Bollywood. 



One Night for One World Panel: *International Women and Business with a Purpose*



From left to right: Stephanie Morrison-Hrbek, Jan Roller, George Hrbek



From left to right: MSASS's Kim McFarlin and Joe Cistone accompanied by MSASS LINK students



Following an incredible One Night for One World event, long-time IPM Volunteers traveled to Italy for a special IPM Immersion Experience delegation for the Canonization of Oscar Romero in Rome, October 2018. From left to right: Fatima Pacas, Clark Pope, Jim Norris, Sarah Pope, Stephanie Washlock, Natalie Norris, Mike Washlock, and Joe Cistone.



Fatima Pacas with Oscar Romero confidant and recently appointed Salvadoran Cardinal, Gregorio Rosa Chavez



From left to right: Kathy Cistone & Sinead Irwin



Echeri International at One Night for One World Vendor, March 2019

CONNECTIONS FOCUS: RESPECTING RELATIONSHIPS


Kenya

For many years, IPM's Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) Regional Office in Nairobi, Kenya, was the hub of our activity and growing presence in the Region. With Project Partners throughout the Great Lakes Region, a Staff of four, Community Partners as diverse as Eaton Corporation & Heikima College, and an active local Advisory Council IPM's presence throughout the Region boomed from 2003-2013.

In September 2013, IPM's International Executive Board traveled to Nairobi for their meeting in conjunction with IPM's fourth SSA Regional Conference. It was a remarkable, life-changing experience—that first ever IPM gathering in Africa—that ended in tragedy with the Westgate Mall Massacre during our penultimate day in country, (see Joe's related column entitled "What Kenya Mall siege can teach us" in the *Saint Louis Post Dispatch*, October 18, 2013).

In light of that terrorist act and related fall-out in Nairobi, IPM temporarily closed our Regional Office while continuing to support our local Partners and nurture particularly worthwhile partnerships with the African Cancer Foundation, the Bride Rescue Program (Kajiado), the Kandula Community Project (Makueni), the Saint Martin des Porres School (Nyabondo), and Watoto wa Lwanga (Kibera) among others. Kenyan Human Rights Attorney Alyne Kemunto Cistone facilitated a number of IPM-affiliated Immersions in Kenya and we continued to dream of reopening our Office there. In 2020, our dream is coming to fruition with two pending Immersion Experiences—Yale Divinity School and the Andover Newton Seminary at Yale (January) and at least one "open" Immersion for Donors & Friends (June).

The January Immersion is the highlight of IPM's renewable three-year memorandum of understanding with Yale and Andover Newton to offer a scholarship Immersion Experience in conjunction with an Autumn course offered by IPM CEO & Yale Lecturer Joe Cistone on a related subject matter—past courses have included Liberation Theology in the Context of Colombia, Liberation Theology in the Context of Interfaith India, Liberation Theology & Migration in the Context of El Salvador, and the current Kenya: A Sacred Encounter—and accompanying Immersion. In 2020-2021 the course will again focus on India. The IPM Family is particularly grateful to longtime donor and friend Hank Doll for making such Scholarship Immersions possible.

As Joe, Alyssa Bovell, Beverly Imali, and Jared Odhiambo of IPM continue their planning for the January Immersion, we look forward to sharing more about IPM's renewed SSA emphasis in the future. If you would like to participate in an upcoming Immersion and/or support IPM's Project Partners and Regional Office there, please contact Joe at: jfcistone@ipmconnect.org. 



Members of the IPM International Executive Board, Staff, and friends gather with DEEDNET Project Partners in Dandora, Kenya, October 2013.



From left to right: Kandula Community Project participant and Caroline Mills, IPM's Project Partner Coordinator for Sacajawea Treasures & Former International Board Chair

CONNECTIONS FOCUS: IMMERSION EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

Immersion Experience Program participants to date: **2,268**

Number of Immersion Experience Programs since 2003: **251**



Yale Divinity School and Andover Newton Seminary 2018 delegation engaging with Jon Sobrino SJ at the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA). Padre Jon is a preeminent proponent of a Theology of Liberation and graciously met with our delegation during their time at the UCA.

India

Women in South Asia are one of the most oppressed populations politically, economically and socially. Whether it is the unborn female child or a young girl, an adolescent or an adult working woman, or even an aged widow. Their trials and tribulation through various life stages can be challenging and horrifying. From tropical hills of Nagercoil in the South of India, to the arid coasts of Gujarat, and the cities of Ahmadabad, Delhi, and Jaipur. From the capital cities of Kathmandu to the villages in Bandipur, the waste pickers in Delhi, or the domestic workers in Jaipur, one sees and experiences similar stories.

Yet these same women embody hope and have a vision for a kind of society that they want to build. They provide a stable environment for their families by creating an equitable society for all. These women plan and manage the resources on their own and understand the organizations they help to manage and sustain over time in the most efficient ways.

Over the years, IPM friends and Partners have focused on women rights and initiatives. *The Building Bridges Program* serves as a health intervention with Trust Hospital in Nagercoil for young women impacted by the tsunami. For empowerment opportunities, women study is provided at the Notre Dame sisters-run school in Vaniyakudi. IPM friends and partners serve as activists for victims of communal violence in the city of Ahmedabad and consequently created *HUM (Hindus United with Muslims)* working on women's rights in their neighborhoods and overall society. Additionally, the *Pochabhai Foundation* was established in Golana where the widow of a Dalit leader first ensured that her children received education who later built the Foundation which works with more than 3,000 women in 27 villages. Dalit women save, farm, and agitate for their rights along with their young daughters who are now becoming leaders in their own rights. While focused on one key area, many of the organizations actually work at many levels trying to meet the needs of the women while trying to build unity within, and meanwhile, confronting and negotiating with various stake holders in society for a better future for themselves and their families.



Women coming together to build better lives for their children, families and villages with the Pochabhai Foundation.


Here are five interesting statistics about women in the region which reveal the kind of environment in which many partners work:

1. 74.8% of rural women in India are agricultural workers but only 9.3% own the land. Source: The 2002 Indian National Sample Survey, Agriculture Census 2005/ 2006, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Government of India.
2. According to a survey in two countries in South Asia, 39% of men and women in India think that it is sometimes or always justifiable for a man to beat his wife. Source: Progress of World's Women: Access to Justice, 2011-12, UN Women.
3. A study on Nepal reports, "In the large cardamom value chain, the work put in by the women, in the farming and processing stages, is crucial to the end product. And yet, women rarely manage to interact with traders, nor do they have the bargaining power to command fair prices in a highly fluctuating market. Additionally, the lack of skills and inability to access credit keeps them from adding value to the product and hampers any efforts to move up the value chain."
4. According to a report developed by the WOREC in 2016, 34.4% of women who engage in domestic work have to bear domestic violence. The report also said 28% of women in agricultural



HUM (Hindus United with Muslims) Self Defense Training

sector, 14% of women holding blue-collared jobs, 13% of female students, 6% of women in business sector, 1% of female teachers, 1% of women working in non-governmental organizations, 0.1% of women in governmental sector, and 0.3% women in social service face some form of violence at their workplace. Nonetheless, women's rights are being advocated for and promoted.

5. Four out of nine South Asian countries now have equal inheritance laws between men and women for land and property. In Nepal, a tax exemption has been introduced to incentivize families to share property with their wives, daughters and sisters. As a result, between 2001 and 2009, women's land ownership has increased threefold. Source: Progress of World's Women: Access to Justice, 2011-12, UN Women. 

Maresh Upadhyaya,
Regional Director, South Asia

IPM MEMORIAL, TRIBUTE, AND SPECIAL GIFTS

Gifts received January 1, 2018 – October 31, 2019

We remain profoundly grateful to our benefactors for their enthusiastic financial support of IPM's mission. All donations, whether made as memorials or as tribute gifts, in succession as regular Monthly Partners in Mission, or as a one-time special gift, are sincerely appreciated. We are pleased to recognize the following contributions:

HONORARY GIFTS:

Joseph F. Cistone
Carol & Marty Findling
Keith & Penny Holste
Clint McCann
Clark Pope
Nina Sheffler & Family
Anne Sowell
Mahesh Upadhyaya
Grace Weber
Adela Zayas

MEMORIAL GIFTS:

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Sammy Mayer
Raymond Moelter
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Edward Schroeder
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Kathy Sehy

Stella Smiga
Mark Steinhoff
Paul & Vercile Strega
Cody van Heerden
Sandra Ingalls van Heerden
Dorothy Zorn

NEW MONTHLY PARTNERS IN MISSION:

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Joyce Pope

MAJOR & SPECIAL GIFTS RECENTLY RECEIVED:

Cheryl & Ken Bauer
The Camiener Foundation, OH
Peter & Rita Carfagna and The Lake County Captains
Alyne & Joseph F. Cistone
The Cleveland Foundation, OH
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John & Laurie Cunningham
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Saint Joseph High School, CT
Saint Noel Church, OH
The Dudley P. & Barbara K. Sheffler Foundation, OH
Diane Schroeder
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Singing for Change Foundation, SC
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Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, MO
US Bank, OH
Iola & Neal Vanstrom
Chris & Linda Warren
Raymond John Wean Foundation, OH
Grace Weber

CREATING PARTNERSHIPS THAT BUILD JUSTICE, PEACE, & HOPE

2018-2019 Report on Annual Giving (as of 10/31/19)

\$75,000 & ABOVE

The Camiener Foundation, OH
The Dudley P. & Barbara K. Sheffler Foundation

\$50,000 - \$74,999

The Cleveland Foundation, OH
College of the Holy Cross, MA
Ostara, a supporting foundation of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, OH
Singing for Change Foundation, SC

\$25,000 - \$49,999

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Stonehill College, MA
United Methodist Church, DC
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Seaside United Church of Christ, ME
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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Hyland Software, OH
Donna & Stewart Kohl
Beverly Lehenbauer Estate
Clint & Sarah McCann
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Saint Joseph High School, CT
Larry Sehy
St. Paul's Community Church, UCC, OH
Mike & Stephanie Washlock

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The Emanuel Bachmann Foundation, CA
Forest Hill Presbyterian Church, OH

The Ganlee Fund, NY
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Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, MO
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El Salvador

Talking about climate change, as a psychologist and mental health professional, I think the apocalyptic and doom message is simply not working. We are approaching this problem with fear and guilt, and from psychology we know that these feelings do not lead to compromise. It's rather the opposite, it leads us to inactivity. It makes people passive, because when we feel fearful or guilt-full, we withdraw from the issue and try to think about something else that makes us feel better.

That is why we may have to approach the problem of climate change from another feeling, such as love. Because from these feelings we can act compromisingly. It leads us to take care and show solidarity from different actions. Love arises from knowledge. It is very difficult, although not impossible, to love something or someone without knowing them or it.

To get to know my people, I want to tell you a story based on true testimonies of our different IPM Project Partners around Latin America.

When you read the story, try to count how many times you read something about nature, whether it is being mentioned in a positive or negative sense.

OUR DAY TODAY IN THIS LAND WE CALL EARTH

Vicky and Mary are already up before Salvadorian dawn! They are the first to wake up at home. When exhaustion almost convinces them to sleep a little more, they remember household chores. They wash their faces, trying to get rid of tiredness lagging for years. They do it with water that falls from their taps, thanks to a water project that they initiated inside the community (because if it wasn't for them and their fight, the community wouldn't still have water till this day). Each day, in their house, they go to their yards to take care of their cows, feed them with grass and corn, which grow in the pastures of the mountains in front of their houses. Running, they go to their place of work as a little house has been flooded by the rains of the dawn. Conchita, their other partner, arrives and gives them bad news. The harvest of rice, beans, coffee and corn is gone. It has been damaged by the storms. Suddenly, she receives a call, it is her friend Rosalia from Nicaragua.

She tells her that the heat in Masaya is unbearable but that they must always fulfil their responsibilities. Rosalia explains, here we work under the sun in 90° F heat to sustain our family gardens. The harvest grows slowly due to bad weather as it does not rain. Here we use our orchards to feed our families, we cook with tomato, cucumber, chiltoma, spinach, lettuce and avocado. With this food our children grow healthier. But none of that has grown,

because of the bad soil. Children are sicker and do not want to go to school. To recover and eat healthy again, we have to travel to the local market, an hour and a half away from our community, in order to buy all the vegetables we need. Our pockets are increasingly empty because of this.

The call is cut by another storm in Armenia, where Conchita lives. Rosalia sees a story in the newspaper that same day that makes her think of her friend Suleyma, from San Juan de la Maguana in the Dominican Republic. Things are not that different in the Dominican Republic; she says rainfall has affected her community. Suleyma must travel to the hospital to get her medicine because of her heart condition, but cannot leave her home. It has not stopped raining in almost five hours, which has paralyzed transportation and normal activities. The streets are flooded and it is too dangerous to even set a foot outside! Luz Dary, in Colombia, also suffers from the rains. Her house is built next to a river that easily overflows. She is afraid of losing her house, her family and her own life every day. This worry comes every time it rains.

All the women think about Rodrigo, our friend from Brazil, who fights as an activist and human and ecological rights defender to stop the suffering that climate change produces in many communities. While going to bed they all pray one day environmental justice arrives to their sacred place.



IPM Partners, Staff, & Friends at Caminata Ecológica in San Salvador, June 2019



Conchita at ACACCPAMU in Armenia, El Salvador, October 2015



Vicky at ACACCPAMU in Armenia, El Salvador, August 2018



CEPROSI, Nicaragua, October 2015

We need to pay more attention to the effects of climate change on Latin America and The Caribbean. The world's largest arable land reserves are concentrated in the region with 576 million hectares, which is equivalent to approximately 30% of its territory. 47% of the regional area is forested. 92% of the regional forest is in South America, mainly in Brazil and Peru. These two countries along with Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Venezuela are home to between 60 and 70% of all life forms on the planet. The third part of the world's



San Salvador, June 2019



StoneHill College Immersion Experience Program in Dominican Republic, March 2019



StoneHill College Immersion Experience Program in Dominican Republic, March 2019



CEPROSI, Nicaragua, July 2019

testimonies we can see that climate change is a matter of justice. As Leonardo Boff said, “The cry of the earth is indeed also the cry of the poor. The fate of the poor and the planet are repeatedly linked. This is because they are the ones who most closely share in the pain of the earth.”

From an ethical point of view, it is unjust that those who are suffering and will suffer more the consequences of climate change are precisely those who have contributed less to its causes.

The most vulnerable groups and regions are suffering and will suffer most consequences of climate change. These groups include the economically poor, indigenous peoples and communities living in low-lying islands. To respond to climate change challenges means to consider these communities and act responsibly and audaciously. In Latin America, we think a response to the climate change crisis is a matter of conversion. By conversion we mean that we need to convert our attitudes, our paradigms, and our lifestyles. To do so, lessons learned from other cultures like native population or African descent could bring new insights to different ways



Holy Cross Immersion Experience Program in Colombia, January 2019

of relating with nature and fellow human beings. We need to start caring more, because when we care and love the earth we are also caring and loving the poor. 🌍

Adela Zayas,
Director of International Partnerships & Programs and Regional Director for Latin America & The Caribbean

renewable water resources is in the Latin American region. Everyone in our region has a close relationship with nature, we even depend on it, on our mother earth, our Pachamama as we call it. She is not a creative deity but a protector and provider; It shelters human beings, makes life possible and favors fertility.

In the story I told you, perhaps you counted approximately 40 words related to natural elements. This reflects the relationship our project partners have with the environment, a very close relationship, as they are in contact with nature since they wake up until they go to sleep. That relationship has changed during the last years, from being positive to negative. More and more people now suffer from environmental changes. Through these

“How to Be, Not Do, in Fascinating El Salvador”

By: Dorothy Wetzel, El Salvador Participant, November 2019

Blog May be Accessed Here: <http://www.modernchurchlady.com/how-to-be-not-do-in-fascinating-el-salvador/>

I was in El Salvador participating in the “More to Migration” seminar organized by the General Board of Church and Society and hosted by IPM, International Partners in Mission. IPM seeks to “expand the participants’ worldview by walking in solidarity with the local communities.” My purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of why the Central Americans I host in my home after they are released from immigration detention leave their countries.

Throughout the week of our immersion trip, we listened eagerly to lectures on migration and visited socially conscious businesses such as NUTRAVIDA Soya program, a cooperative that provides soy products to low-income Salvadorans to supplement their daily nutrition. Rather than doing something for the people we met, the idea was “to be present, to listen and to learn from our hosts.”

Several of us inveterate doers struggled with the concept of just being. The group was composed of spirited people who work on the literal frontlines to feed, house and defend the rights of migrants. While there is no color-coded chart for being, our IPM hosts introduced us to a beautiful philosophy of Accompanying written by Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt, a noted author, educator and grief counselor.

As the group took turns reading each line, I felt my hypervigilant mind start to power down. I put away my solution seeking habit of frantically flipping through my brain like a rolodex. With each sentence, my heart clicked more solidly into gear and stayed there throughout the week, vacillating wildly between despair, shame, fear and hope.

Enervating despair saturated my heart as I saw that a country can become so lawless that the government can gun down priests and nuns with impunity, leaving only their blood-stained garments to rest safely within glass museum cases.

Prickly cold shivers of fear zapped my body when the words of past Salvadoran autocrats mirrored phrases now emerging from the mouths of US politicians. Hot shame flowed through my veins with the realization that the US government continues to use El Salvador as a chessboard, arranging the pieces for a guaranteed win, willfully disregarding the cost to the Salvadoran people.



From left to right: Adela Zayas and Conchita Mendez of ACACCPAMU, El Salvador



United Methodist Global Office for Church & Society El Salvador Immersion Experience delegation November 2019 at lunch and with Anita from Pueblo de Dios, Mejicanos, San Salvador.

But sparks of hope lit up my soul as we met women hacking out a dignified life, clearing away seemingly impenetrable prickly thickets of unknowable pain, “machismo” culture and relentless poverty. As surely as the birds of El Salvador greet each dawn with song, these women of El Salvador rise each morning determined to make a new, more just day. And I am grateful for the opportunity to accompany them on their journey, my heart swelled by just being in their presence and listening to their stories. 🌍

Wabanaki Reservation Immersion Experience Program in Maine

Since 2017 IPM has been facilitating Immersions with the indigenous Wabanaki Peoples of the Maine region. Designed to broaden the scope of understanding between the Wabanaki and non-native people, the groups spend a week talking, sharing meals, and experiencing Native People's way of life. They meet with tribal leaders and elders to listen to their stories and become informed about their current successes and challenges, becoming allies in the struggle for healing of our shared pain based in historical and present-day colonization.

We explore social justice issues, including Native Peoples struggles with treaty violations; significance of language in domination and oppression; decolonization; water rights; food security; and restriction of water access/resources. The aim is to transform stereotypes and make the indigenous peoples visible. As one Stonehill College participant shared,

In all honesty, I didn't really know much about the indigenous population of the United States before coming here. I had assumed that the history I was taught in school was correct but after spending time at Nibezun I know now that it was false. I am so glad I came here! I was living in ignorant bliss before. Now I know the hardships and injustices the indigenous peoples have faced, and I cannot allow my soul to settle with that knowledge. I feel called to action.

The group stays at Nibezun, a Native-led organization that seeks to revitalize and preserve Wabanaki culture, traditions, and lifeways by hosting groups at their cultural center on ancestral lands on the Penobscot River. The Wabanaki Confederacy are a First Nations and Native Peoples confederation of five principal nations: the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, Abenaki, and Penobscot. Each day begins with a welcoming the dawn ceremony and ends with storytelling and reflections. The intent is to have Native People tell their own story. The Immersion is designed to plumb the depths of understanding, bring up uncomfortable subjects and feelings, then give resources for processing and moving forward in the participant's lives. The hope is that the experience will build a foundation for continued awareness and action in social justice initiatives.

Prior to this trip, I was greatly unaware of the many issues Native People face every day but hearing people's personal stories opened my eyes to the things I've been conditioned to ignore.

My experience at Nibezun has informed and influenced my life by enlightening me about the Native community in Maine and the struggles that they and so many Native Americans across our country face. I realize that we have systems in place to weaken and that discriminate against Native Peoples. I see this in action today, including struggles between Natives and big corporations looking to place pipelines through their land. Finally, I continue to realize and hear the strength of Natives, the special and sustainable bond they have with the land and appreciate their open hearts that continue to welcome and educate outsiders about their way of life, culture, history, and personal struggles.

I seek to continue learning about, supporting Native Americans in maintaining their rights, and spreading awareness about the problems they face. Too many people are in the dark and Nibezun is a wonderfully intimate, unique place to educate and enlighten people about Native life—everything and anything.

Carolyn Grady, 2017 Stonehill Immersion 🌍

Rosalie Kell,
Consultant for IPM's New England and Wabanaki Programs



Flute maker Hawk Henries, member of the Chaubunagungamaug band of Nipmuck, shared his music and thoughts on Native People's colonization experiences with participants.



Donald Soctomah, Passamaquoddy tribal historian, met with Stonehill College Immersion Experience participants at Saint Anne Parish Church, Motahkomikuk, Maine.



Shiawah Noh and spouse Tim Shay teach immersion participants social dancing.



Traditional Passamaquoddy basket maker Gabriel Frey shows an Immersion participant how to strip ash for baskets.

New Staff in the IPM Family



From left to right: Martita Mendoza, Adela Zayas, Kristina Aiad-Toss, Brenna Dilley, Teresa de Jesús Mejía de Martínez, Julieta Borja, & Fatima Pacas

Kristina Aiad-Toss, Community Outreach & Event Coordinator

As Community Outreach & Event Coordinator, Kristina supports the IPM leadership team from the International Headquarters in Northeast Ohio with a secondary focus on Metropolitan Saint Louis, MO and other IPM markets nationally. Kristina also coordinates IPM's signature events.

Kristina Aiad-Toss joined IPM in January 2019 as a graduate student intern. Kristina is currently attending law school at Case Western Reserve University with a focus on international humanitarian law. As a law student, Kristina participates in the Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Court Team, does human rights research for the Yemen Accountability Project, and volunteers on an anti-human trafficking task force. While an undergrad, Kristina has lived abroad in three countries: studying abroad in Spain over the summer, interning under a member of parliament in Toronto, and working for the Department of State in Rome. Kristina has also worked in political advocacy, environmental issues, immigration services, event planning, and journalism. Although Kristina is studying law, she also has a photography business on the side. Kristina hopes to obtain a career in international economic development.

1. Who inspires your work?

The individuals IPM empowers through our Project Partners are the inspiration behind my work. When I think of why I chose this line of work, my mind first goes to the amazing individuals I met in El Salvador this summer. All of them have been through so much. They've lost loved ones in a brutal civil war. Their family members have been forced to migrate to the U.S. to flee violence or provide for their children. They face the reality of gang violence in their communities every day. The government is corrupt and doesn't care about providing basic human rights to its people. Yet, despite all this, they

haven't given up hope. They are working tirelessly every day to advocate for human rights and to build their communities. This resilient spirit is what inspires me in the work I do for IPM and I hope to take it with me as I continue to work for the empowerment of vulnerable communities.

2. What is your hope for IPM?

My hope for IPM is to continue planting the seeds that help individuals and communities grow around the world. As IPM evolves, I'd like to see IPM's work expand into advocating for human rights, and as a current law student, I would like to help create project and community partnerships that do just that.

Brenna Dilley, Director of Education & Community Engagement

As Director of Education & Community Outreach, Brenna collaborates with community nonprofits, global initiatives, local schools, and educational programs in order to promote social justice and enhance community awareness about IPM's regional partners in Latin America & The Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia. Brenna also coordinates the Immersion Experience Program in order to connect Cleveland to the world.

1. Who inspires your work?

The fight for human rights and victim advocacy inspires my work by giving me genuine purpose. When we advocate for one, we advocate for many. Helping a domestic violence victim means that her children can break free from cyclical violence. Helping an abused child can lead to a brighter future. Helping empower a community can change a nation. Vital change starts at home by these individuals who strengthen our communities and honor my purpose. I continue to fight for our change through my work at IPM.

2. What is your hope for IPM?

IPM is more than partnership across borders promoting justice, peace, and hope; IPM is a bond of beautiful souls who give a voice to the voiceless and create a call to action for all who will listen. My hope for IPM is to give more voice to the voiceless, inspire social justice activism worldwide, and to connect Cleveland to the world.

Brenna cultivated her passion for international work back in 2011 while providing case management for Burmese refugees. She dedicated eight years to nonprofit work in the form of refugee work in Senegal, domestic work in various women's shelters, children's shelters and county jails. Brenna sought a position at IPM after volunteering during Summer 2019 to investigate war crimes that took place during the Salvadoran Civil War, along with U.S. involvement in aiding and abetting those war crimes. Her passion for IPM was ignited as she met with Salvadoran project partners who channeled community need into action with IPM's community-specific assistance model. She is excited to move forward with IPM by collaborating with community partners and brainstorming with schools and social justice programs; connecting more youth to the world through immersions experience programs and enhancing community development worldwide by tailoring solutions to each community's needs.



From left to right: Adela Zayas, Victoria Jimenez, and Eneyda Ramos during the United Methodist Global Office for Church & Society El Salvador Seminar Immersion Experience, November 2019.

Victoria Jimenez, Latin America & The Caribbean Logistics Coordinator

As Latin America & The Caribbean Logistics Coordinator, Vicki organizes Immersion Experiences that are enjoyable, educational and powerful opportunities to learn about the Latin American reality, its struggles and challenges; as well as to embrace the beautiful, colorful and warm cultures of El Salvador, filled with people who are strong and perseverant in trying to achieve a world that is just and filled with peace.

1. Who inspires your work?

My society inspires my work, as well as the belief that little by little I can help make a better country and a better world. I love working with people, to accompany them, as I am a witness of their growth and development. I strongly believe that, if we all work together and make little changes in our communities, we will groom the upcoming generations to make bigger changes to achieve a world that is peaceful and just.

2. What is your hope for IPM Project Partners in El Salvador?

My biggest hope for the Project Partners is for them to continue on developing themselves and their communities. I hope for them to fulfill their goals and overcome their challenges. I also wish they could become recognized on a national level as they are great examples of perseverance, strength, faith and solidarity. I hope they can continue inspiring other people in El Salvador to become community leaders, who are defenders of the human rights.

Victoria joined the IPM staff in September 2019, as the Immersion Experience Program Coordinator for the Latin America and Caribbean Office. Vicki graduated with her psychology degree in 2017. She studied in *Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas*. She has had formation in different backgrounds: as psychologist, as a teacher and as a dancer. She has worked with

children since 2009, teaching creative dancing from ages 2 to 11. She has also worked with youth and adults as a dance teacher and as a psychologist. She feels passionate and identified about IPM's values and vision of social change.

Eneyda Ramos, Regional Office Associate, Latin America & The Caribbean

As Regional Office Associate, Latin America & The Caribbean, Eneyda provides regular training to Project Partners in community mobilization, program planning, and organizational development. She identifies "high profile" opportunities for IPM to engage the local community and expand human rights networking. Eneyda creates and provides accompaniment to diverse volunteer programs that will ensure social and economic growth for IPM's Project Partners in the LAC region.

1. Who inspires your work?

I cannot mention a single person; I would rather say that people who inspire my work are each and every person I work with at IPM. I am referring to the women of Musas Creativas, the teachers and children of El Patronato Lidia Coggiola, the women of NUTRAVIDA and ACOMUJERZA and the youth and members of the IDES board. Because they always work and give 100% of themselves for their dreams. So, by learning through them, I feel I cannot work less than they do and as part of IPM I have to give 100% of me for their projects and support them as much as I can.

2. What is your hope for IPM Project Partners in El Salvador?

That each one of the projects can achieve their dreams and improve their lives. I hope more people get involved with their initiatives so they can live in harmony, with dignity, in a country where their rights are respected. That way they can unite strong and long-term ties with other people in their community and finally live in an El Salvador full of justice, peace and hope.

Eneyda graduated from the University of El Salvador with a degree in anthropology. She studied a course of advocating the recognition of the work of human rights defenders at *Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas University (UCA)* and a course of Human Rights at School of the Procuraduría for Human Rights. She worked at *Archivo General de la Nación* as a research assistant in various subjects such as research of the organization of the government of El Salvador in the 19th and 20th centuries and elaboration of the project: "Social Cohesion, Identity, and History from the Historical Center." Eneyda has collaborated as a facilitator in the Political Leadership workshop with the topic "Political Anthropology and Gender," carried out in the Faculty of Jurisprudence and Social Sciences of the University of El Salvador. She was a volunteer at *Comité de Familiares de Víctimas de Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos (CODEFAM)*, where she collected testimonies of the relatives who are victims of human rights violations for documentation. Also, she did her community service at *Pro-Búsqueda* where she used to help in the unification of records and interviews, according to the case number, name of the missing child, department, state in which the file was located, consultation of adoption records for digital registration and translation of documentation from English to Spanish. She has also worked on a research project called "Structural Violence and Civil Society: Continuities and Breaks in the Phenomenon of the Disappearance in El Salvador (1970-2016)." 🌐

Respecting and Nurturing Our Project Partners

As we celebrate our 45th Anniversary, we are pleased to highlight some of IPM's inspiring Project Partners and vital programs offering a mere snapshot of the tremendous potential your support has and can continue to provide. Your donation, whether designated to a specific IPM Project Partner and/or to our Where Needed Most, Children, Women, or Youth General Funds, will be used in support of IPM's mission through accompaniment, funding, regional and international gatherings, technical assistance and training, and other vital programmatic areas in our work where the boundaries of culture, faith, and economic circumstance melt away.

India (Ahmedabad) HUM

"My name is Muskan and I am 15 years old, I am study 9th std in MS public school. I live in Shahaalamarea; my



father is auto riksha driver and my mom is a house wife. I have 3 sisters and I am 4th, the youngest in my family. My two sisters are married and one sister works in home. My parents don't

allow any daughters to study in school because our area is not safe for girls but my mother wants me to study and make life good. I was involved in two incidences in my life of violence.

One time I participated in a self-defence programme organised by HUM then I listen with self-protect and self-defence karate. I want to learn and protect myself. Now I learn karate and having joined karate class, I have so much confidence to go anywhere alone. My parents are also happy to see me grow and my father gave me a karate dress. Thank you IPM so much for this confidence."



HUM is providing Ayesha's parents admission and giving a school bag for her education with support from IPM.

"My name is Ayesha and I live near Chandola lake. I study in 4th std in Gujarati Government school, number-3. My father is working in a brooms factory and my mom is working as a domestic worker. I have one brother; I like to go to school but my parents are not good financially."

El Salvador (Zaragoza) ACOMUJERZA



"The associate Janeth Argueta joined the Cooperative two and a half years ago and has been benefited with work in the production area, this has allowed her to have income to take the livelihood to her house where she lives with her two children, after her husband abandoned them. Joining the Cooperative gave her greater self-confidence and empowered her role within the Education Committee." Ana Morales, Board of Directors ACOMUJERZA


El Salvador (Zaragoza) Lidia Coggiola



"Living in a family, there are 13 children, they have four children who are beneficiaries of our school reinforcement program and educational scholarships, the change of life occurs in their educational growth of their children, one in university degree, high school and their other two children in third cycle, they collaborate a lot in the organizational process of the community, they participate in Radio Balmaso, you decide project and folk projection." Carlos Diaz, PLC Coordinator

Nicaragua (San Francisco Libre) CEPROSI



"Aracely Ampie, 32, with her partner have 2 children under the age of 4, lives in the Papayal community and is an active member of the Community Rotary Fund - Women and Change program. Since the beginning of the program (November 2017) she has already obtained 2 credits that allowed her to buy the land and is building her home. This legal access to land constitutes for Aracely the base that erects its solid economic autonomy, through which it feels more secure physically and economically." Xenia Chevez 

Empowering Community Leaders Through IPM's Fellow Training Program

Initiated as an outcome of the 2014 inaugural International General Assembly, IPM's Fellowship Program began in South Asia in 2016. IPM's fellow Model involves coaching, mentoring, and empowering leaders so they can support the formation of community organizations, increasing the collective strength of initiatives that work in favor of the materially poor and socially disadvantaged. The project emphasis is on training and mobilizing communities to access resources within their own countries for development and related projects.

IPM chose Himmat Chauhan, of the *Pochabhai Foundation* in Golana, India, to pilot the Fellowship Program. Himmat's work in Golana and surrounding 27 villages directly impacts more than 3,000 women, children, and men.

Another IPM Fellow, Fulmati Thapa, was chosen from Nepal who currently works with *Project Arthumka*. Fulmati visits primary schools (i.e. Bhairab Prathamik Vidhayala, Arthumka, Bandipur, etc.) with Prayas Nepal team. She further organizes orientation training for women groups in Bandipur. These trainings educate women on how to run their group regularly, sustainably, and how to generate income. Additionally, Fulmati attends meetings with village municipalities for the *Eye Camp* to keep regular eye check-ups for villagers, to assist in organizing the eye clinic and programs in Bandipur, and to provide budgeting about taxes with the villagers. 🌐

Mahesh Upadhyaya,
Regional Director, South Asia



Hostels ensure that the children continue their education in towns where transportation is difficult to access. July 2019.



"The expression of happiness made me feel proud for Prayas, Nepal. Some told us they didn't expect to see, their vision came back again without any cost in this old age. They thought they will die without seeing, with blindness." – Fulmati Thapa, IPM Fellow in Nepal



Pictured on the right: Fulmati Thapa, (IPM Fellow in Nepal), with her late father and mother in Bandipur, 2015.



Himmat Chauhan, (IPM International Fellow in India), presenting an organic farming kit to a local woman, 2019.

Respect remains a lingering catalyst on this journey together as we nurture our Partners, Projects, and relationships with each of you!

IPM is the multi-faith successor organization to Partners in Mission, founded by Lutheran missionaries Jim Mayer, Paul Strege and others in 1974.

IPM works across borders of culture, faith, and economic circumstance with children, women, and youth to nurture partnerships that build justice, peace, and hope through transformational learning opportunities and programs.

Join us as we provide opportunities and programs—grounded in equity and resiliency—that affirm and promote the inherent human dignity of all persons.

45th Anniversary Connections

A Publication of IPM

Connections shares experiences and stories about people of faith working in partnerships to promote change.

Connections is mailed to 5,000 donors and friends worldwide. If you are interested in receiving **Connections** or would like us to add a friend, family member, congregation, or organization to our mailing list, please contact us at +1.216.932.4082, or via email at bdilley@ipmconnect.org.

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