For the last 6 months or so we have been talking about the Foundation reaching a major milestone, having surpassed $1,000,000 in grants awarded. On April 23, 2016, the Foundation’s board hosted a celebration in Houston. We are grateful to our speakers, Matt Mitro, with Indego Africa, Leah Vinton, with Mercado Global, and Caitlyn Peake with Green Empowerment, as well as the many supporters who joined us. Now that the celebration is over, we can continue our focus on working toward the 2nd Million Dollars in grants. This quarter alone we funded 2 new Project Grants, 2 Project Grant renewals, 2 Fellows grants, as well as 8 Volunteer Service Awards. It is a big world out there and there is so much more that can be done!
Project Grant Renewal

Last summer Project Alianza, a new 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working in Nicaragua on coffee plantations was awarded $5,000 to begin their project. According to their proposal, “Seasonal, regional migration of coffee farm families leads children to experience fragmented education and pervasive child labor incidence. Project Alianza has developed a Primary School Initiative to fill the education gap in rural coffee communities by providing quality, comprehensive education on-site at large coffee farms… Our model entails: 1) offering quality primary school directly on remote coffee farms with adequate supplies including books and computers; 2) hosting parent workshops to generate intrinsic values among families; 3) providing workforce development training for teachers and child care workers working in our school and the community; 4) building a community garden to both augment education programs and supplement the local food supply; 5) further supplementing government food rations (beans, rice, oil and tortilla) with locally grown fruits and vegetables; and 6) administering anti-parasite medicines and hosting hygienic education for children biannually.” Our board gave them the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet their ambitious goals. According to their 6-month progress report:

- 180+ students went through their primary school and summer school “bridge program”
- 450+ lives were impacted through teacher trainings, home visits, and parent workshops which included handwashing, hygiene, health, gender equality, school development, and constructive discipline
• 40+ children received health care visits, including 3 administrations of anti-parasite medicines
• 4 teachers from the local community were employed

The Board was impressed by their progress and voted to award an additional grant of $5,000.

Volunteer Service Award

Shanelle D’Alessio began her 13-month commitment as a Program Director with Manna Project International in Nicaragua in July 2015, and received a Spring 2015 Volunteer Service Award. In her reports she provided details about her work with the local medical clinic as well as a number of interesting observations, but her most important learning had nothing to do with any of the specifics of her assignment, “I’ve learned that nothing will be effective unless you listen to the needs and wants of the people that you serve, and look realistically at what resources they have access to... Only by working alongside the community can our work be successful.” Shanelle was awarded a supplemental Volunteer Service Award that will help her with expenses as she continues to volunteer in Nicaragua until she completes her assignment in August 2016.
Carley Clement also was a 13-month volunteer Program Director with Manna Project International (MPI), beginning in August 2014. She worked in Ecuador, near Quito. Toward the end of her volunteer commitment she had the opportunity to leverage her
experience and involvement with the community to act as the program administrator for the new partnership between MPI and another US-based nonprofit, Education Global Access Program (E-Gap), to begin offering entrepreneurship and vocational training classes to community members. For taking this leadership role during her 2nd year in Ecuador, Carley was awarded an AllPeopleBeHappy Fellows grant. As the local administrator for the project, Carley is overseeing all aspects of program implementation. In January of 2016, the first round of courses began with a pool of eight individuals from the underserved community of Rumiloma. The class was divided according to specific interests in order to be able to provide more targeted learnings to participants. A six-week series of courses was thus developed for those looking for a job. The 2nd round of courses began in late April, this time targeting those who are looking to start or expand their own small businesses. Carley has been supervising one of Manna Project’s first-year Program Directors in developing the syllabus and organizing course material in accordance with the curriculum provided by E-GAP.