


Global Women's Leadership Network
Whole Woman, Whole Leader, Whole World
NEWSLETTER

November 2009

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Holding Up Half the Sky



By Linda Alepin

There is an old Chinese proverb that states that "Women hold up half the sky." This concept has been used in the title of a new book by Pulitzer Prize winning writers, Nicholas Kristoff and Sheryl WuDunn -- [Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide](#). The book clearly states that "empowering women in the developing world is both morally right and strategically imperative."

Bill Gates, Sr. in his overview of the book states, "It's time that people around the world recognize the full implication of that wise proverb and work together to ensure that women everywhere are able to rise to their fullest potential -- for themselves and so that we all can benefit from the contributions they will make to global society."

Holding up half the sky is the work Global Women's Leadership Network has been doing for the last five years with our program, Women Leaders for the World (WLW). As part of our newsletter this month, we give you three thumbnail sketches of women leaders who will be attending this December's program. These women, and the others who will be part of the class, are experienced in enabling change in the areas of education, health, children's rights and the environment. They are seeking a new level of leadership that will allow them to extend their impact to thousands more people around the world.

GWLN needs your help to raise the funds for this impactful program. Some truly extraordinary individuals showed their commitment with major donations. I thank Nilofer Merchant, Morgan Family Foundation, Perl Nelson Family Fund, Sarah Kailath Women's Leadership Fund of Indians for Collective Action, and Dan and Charmaine Warmenhoven. The women participants, even those from developing countries, have each made a contribution toward the cost of their room, board, airfare and faculty/coaching fees. There is a gap of \$25,000 to fully fund the program.

I ask that you make a donation.

Every donation makes a difference. A single donation of \$20 pays for a woman's dinner. A \$200 donation will pay for half the class' dinner one evening. A \$2,000 donation will pay for an airfare from a country like Kenya.

Now **JOIN US!** Be part of our "**Holding UP Half the Sky Club**" by donating \$20, \$200, \$2000 or another amount.

To donate, [click on this link](#)

If you are interested in making a donation by check, make it out to Santa Clara University, GWLN and send it to Linda Alepin, Lucas Hall 316C, Santa Clara University, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95053. To make a monthly or multi-year commitment, send an email to me at lalepin@scu.edu.

Global Women's Leadership Network and women everywhere thank you.

FEATURED WOMAN LEADERS

They are holding up half the sky!



PATRICIA EIYO-ELOTU - UGANDA

Teaching Ugandan Women Farmers to Grow Sustainable Cash Crops

As a child, Patricia and her Ugandan family lived in Sudan as refugees, continually threatened with starvation. Patricia's role with Purchase for Progress, a program made possible through a partnership between the U.N. World Food Program in Uganda and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will educate and empower small women farmers who are responsible for 60 percent of Uganda's crops. Through Patricia's work, these women will have the opportunity to upgrade their skills, apply greater knowledge to sustainable farming and gain access to higher paying

markets. The results: education for their families, better paying jobs and healthier lives.

[Click here to find out more about Patricia's work.](#)



ESTHER PERALEZ-DIECKMANN - USA

Guiding Female Offenders to Establish Healthy Lives

Having survived a difficult childhood, Esther is keenly aware of the challenges facing women who leave San Jose, CA's Elmwood Correctional Facility. About 85 percent are victims of domestic violence; almost 80 percent are mothers and 30 percent have children under five years old; many are repeat offenders. As Director of the Office of Women's Policy in Santa Clara County, Calif., Esther is creating coordinated, trauma-informed, gender-responsive transitional housing, training, and jobs-the highest requests from the women inmates. Esther believes this approach will help the women and the many affected children finally break this recidivistic cycle and walk a path to independence and success.

[Click here to find out more about Esther's work](#)



ADITI KAUR - INDIA

Empowering Rural Indian Youth to Transform Their Communities

"They're just kids. What can they really do?" In 2001, Aditi founded Mountain Children's Foundation (MCF) in the city of Dehradun, believing she could positively answer that question. Aditi believes that rural Indian youth living in the mountainous Himalayan region near Tibet and Nepal can gain knowledge of their rights and successfully advocate for themselves and their communities. MCF and its local and regional non-governmental organization (NGO) partners give 13-to-18-year-olds the training, skills and confidence to implement transformative local projects, including access to quality education, electricity and clean water.

[Click here to find out more about Aditi Kaur's work](#)

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