

# Together, We Can!

### An LP4Y Network to help with the integration of young victims of exclusion.

In trying to help excluded young people LP4Y has set itself an ambitious task, requiring commitment from each of us, wherever we may be. LP4Y, now active in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and soon in the US, should ultimately expand wherever there are women and men who wish to support our cause with enthusiasm and determination. LP4Y must be up to the task of accompanying all those who chose to embark on this journey.

It is essential though, that LP4Y oversee this development, ensuring that the mission, philosophy, values and operating standards of each of the LP4Y structures is coherent. We have therefore decided to create a Network for the various LP4Y associations. This Network will be in place by the end of 2011.

Thierry Delaporte President, LP4Y France





### Newsletter #4

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An LP4Y network	1
Greatness in a drop of water	1
The Green Team, budding	
entrepreneurs	2
At the Old Balara LPC :	
Natural H Care	3
24 young people	
the Hear Us! team	4
The Hear Us community	5
Vitas-Tondo for young mothers	5
My.Craft in Cebu City	6
"Keep going,	
the best is yet to come"	7
A great team of pioneers	7
Imagine LP4Y's next 3 years	8
Thank you	
to all our entrepreneurs	8
Join the fundraising team!	8
Embark together	8



"Let's embark together on this venture with young victims of poverty "







Creation in the <u>Philippines</u>: sept. 2009 Age of first program: 18 months Number of centres opened: 5 Number of young people involved: 80 Ratio of boys to girls: 55/45

Young people receiving allowance: 100% Next program: Life Project Center Tondo Vitas Beneficiaries: Young mothers Next inauguration: Hear Us House Iligan

# Greatness in a drop of water ...



"In one atom can be found all the elements of the earth; in one movement of the spirit can be found all the movements of the laws of existence, in one drop of water can be found all the secrets of the endless ocean, in one glimpse of you are all aspects of existence."

These words come from Marc de Smedt's preface to "the Prophet" by Khalil Gibran, and I quote them because to me they perfectly express LP4Y's approach in the Philippines. We recognize the minuteness of a drop of water in the work carried out by Jean-Marc, Laure and the volunteers when compared to the challenge of 500 million young people worldwide living in extreme poverty. And yet we recognize the enormity and grandeur of the ocean in what they are doing. We find the minuteness of an atom in the micro-businesses (Green, Green Garden, My.Craft, Natural H Care, Hear Us),

and at the same time recognize the enormity of the entrepre-

neurship which enables these young people to grow, achieve

their potential, escaping misery, violence and all sorts of abuse. So that in turn they can give other young people the chance to combine hope and dignity in their daily lives. And of course in the evolution of the spirit of these young people from the streets of the Philippines who have opted for the long and difficult road of learning and apprenticeship with its many obstacles, we recognize the movements of the laws of human existence.

Let me finish with another extract from the same book, but this time from Khalil Gibran himself, talking about giving:

"... You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give... There are those who give little of the much which they have, and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire makes their gifts unwholesome. And there are those who have little and give it all. These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and their coffer is never empty.

Alain Devresse, Président LP4Y Luxembourg



# In the Training Centre in Paranaque: the Green Team, budding entrepreneurs!

### What's the Green Program up to?

You are now acquainted with the team of young people from the Green Program, in their green polo shirts. Their "business school" is the weekly home delivery of fresh fruit and vegetables. Three of them have now reached the Management stage – a difficult level requiring various skills, some of which have not yet been fully acquired. It becomes increasingly demanding; how much can we reasonably ask of them? Eleven others are at the Responsibility stage – a stage that increases their self-confidence rapidly, as well as their confidence in others! Three more have left the program, either to continue their studies or because they have found work. And one left without any warning; we have not yet managed to renew contact. Our clients remain loyal, and the client base renews itself. We will boost our communication in September to try and attract new clients to ensure we remain viable.

#### Are there any other projects in the pipeline?

Yes. Lots. The **Green Garden**, our fresh herb plantation, is beginning to bear fruit. We are constantly working to improve the growing conditions. But it is extremely hot at the moment, and water consumes a large part of our budget. So we are waiting until the necessary budget becomes available before taking on new team members and making further investments. In the meantime we have already been lent 3 plots of land!

### Who are our partners in this program?

In developing our client base we are generously supported by the French-, Spanish- and English-speaking ex-pat community. We hope that this relationship will continue to develop. Frances Valadji took us to the Farmers' Market in Manila to look at fresh produce and try to recognize quality. Anna, also known as Coco, a brilliant American Filipino student, has been a dynamic and patient English teacher for the entire year, giving both group and individual lessons. Oscar, on loan from the Ministry of Agriculture, has given invaluable advice on the Green Program plantations. The Echeverria family, who own half of Valley Vista Village, are unfailing in their offers of assistance, helping the Centre to integrate with the wider community. In addition they have generously offered the use of plantation areas for the Green Program. And none of this would be possible without the energetic team of LP4Y volunteers, overseen by Marie Prache, their dynamic team leader, who is about to start her second year.



With Father Matthieu, President TNK Foundation



### At the Old Balara LPC: Natural H Care

In just 6 months you've created a real company, producing and distributing beauty products. What is your secret?

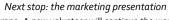
We've only just begun! But things have certainly moved fast in Old Balara. The first time we visited this poor district, largely made up of corrugated metal shacks and partly-built houses, we saw so many young people just sitting by the side of the road in the middle of the day that we realized something needed to be done. We decided to open a Life Project Centre with a view to developing sales jobs ... but without knowing in what field. Our meeting with the Sons of Charity marked a turning point: "Rather than creating yet another activity, why don't you support us in developing and stabilizing what has already been started?" was the gentle suggestion of Father Daniel, who is a tireless pillar of this community of impoverished families. The plans were already in place; they just needed to be put into action. During the first few weeks the young team members wondered what they'd gotten themselves into. Every morning at 8 for the first few months Grégoire, the LP4Y volunteer, would go to their homes, one by one, and get them out of bed. And then gradually they got the hang of it. Today, as you can see in the photo, there is a range of products and the first sales have been made in Makati, the wealthy district of Manila. A first small yet very tangible success!

#### Is the key to involve the community?

Yes, that's a very important first step. We were assisted on an almost daily basis by **Brother Arnel**, who knows this teeming area like that back of his hand. From the start he believed in our project, without knowing for sure where it was going. Just trusting. **Doctor** 

Ben was responsible for helping with technicalities. He has given his life to helping the poor, and spends his days rushing from one pharmacy to another. He talks to the young people as he would to business leaders, encouraging them to take control of their lives. "Do not wait for help from the US; it will come too late". It helps motivate them! We've also been supported by Komisyon ng Kalusugan (the Health Commission, made up of a dozen Community Health Workers and a dentist), including Ate Connie, our first supporter, and the production team. Lastly, for those times when spirits are low - or high - there is **Father JJ**. Thank you Jean-Jacques!

#### What is the next step?



In a few weeks **Grégoire** will be returning to Europe. A new volunteer will continue the work. And our main aim in the short term is to have a smooth hand-over. But **Jean-Baptiste**, (no novice when it comes to training LP4Y volunteers) is ready!





# At the Iligan LPC: 24 young people – the Hear Us! team



Less than a year ago you launched the computer data entry business with young deaf people who had not got beyond primary schooling. Do you believe it will work?

To start with we were motivated less by a desire to succeed than by not wanting to waste an opportunity! Our first meeting with the young people was a turning point. When we left them, returning to Manila via 2 hours on a plane, 2 hours on a bus and 2 taxi rides, we had already promised to return.

But no one believed us! Several times we were asked if we would really return. In fact the seeds of the business had already been sown 8 year previously by **Chay** and her husband **Karl** who founded the **School for the Deaf in Iligan (SDI)**. Despite several typhoons, both literal and figurative, a small group of supporters was fighting for the survival of the primary school for the deaf.

The corner stone of this enterprise is **Father Henri** (in red in the photo on the right hand page) who would not for one moment dream of sending these children back to their world of silence. Thanks to generous gifts from LP<sub>4</sub>Y donors, the foundation was able to take over the school's costs until an alternative sponsor was found (now the **Enfants du Mékong**). This was the beginning. Very soon the LP<sub>4</sub>Y team was able to launch the **Hear Us! Project** for young deaf people of 17 and above. They were soon joined by various key figures from lligan City: **Grace Quijano**, from the highly regarded **Kumon** training centre, and her husband **Dean**, legal adviser with Hear Us!; **Ernesto Empig**, Head of the **IT Department of Iligan University**; **Julita Bok**-

ingo, Head of the Business Administration and Accountancy College. But also Royce Torres a brilliant entrepreneur and Head of the Medical School, who agreed to become Treasurer of SDI, and more recently Franklin Quijamo, former Mayor of Iligan city, and a specialist in community mediation. The list is long. We must also mention Brother Rafael Reyes Director of LaSalle Academy, which has generously lent space for SDI and the Hear Us! Program. Going back to the question, yes, we now believe in the viability of this project because all the tools and people necessary to its success are available and committed to it.

#### Where are you in terms of production?

The team is increasingly committed to developing data entry skills (speed, efficiency, comprehension, following procedures, etc). To start with we had just 6 computers; soon we will have 1 for every 2 young people, thanks to the generous donation from Cap Gemini 10 2001! We could never have imagined that these young people would have such powers of concentration. In a few weeks they will begin inputting for test clients. We plan to start working for real clients (and billing them!) at the end of 2011.

#### Do you have other priorities?

Work and the acquisition of skills are but one part of LP4Y's "Professional Training for Entrepreneurs". The other part is focused on the personal development of each young person, and the preparation of their Life Project Plan. The next step is planning for life as part of a community. More on page 5

What is the secret of the successful launch of this program?

An exceptionally committed team of volunteers working under Estelle, an amazing coordinator who will go far!



# A place for the young people to learn about living in a community: the Hear Us! House

Hear Us!, which was at first just an idea, is now a daily reality.

: « I can't but together we can ».



### Aurora, the program for young mothers: due to open late September 2011 in Vitas-Tondo

Vitas in Tondo is one of the poorest neighborhoods in Manila. Also known as Tempo or "Happyland" this vast area has been excluded from Government projects for decades. It lies between the port and the rubbish dumps, a terrible place where all human misery can be found. Here more than 100,000 people live in abject poverty, including 70% of young people and children, fighting daily for survival. Most work in the recycling of rubbish to make a few pesos to survive. Along with hunger and weakness both physical and mental – the majority of the inhabitant of Vitas also has to deal with violence and addictions. Young girls are particularly easy targets for all sorts of illicit traffic. When we became aware of the situation of the young people in Vitas we went to visit the area several times. It was when we met Princess that a plan started to emerge. Aged 17 with 2 children and a baby already, she has neither husband nor work. She admitted to us that being pregnant is one way to avoid being forced into prostitution.

The Vitas Life Project Centre will open at the end of September 2011. It is set up exclusively for young mothers, initially 10 to 12 in number. The business / school, which provides the key to insertion, will focus on creation and production of handicrafts (jewelry, bags, small furniture and home accessories) made from recycled materials (wood, plastic, cardboard). Throughout the training period (Monday — Friday from 7am to 4pm) the children and babies will be looked after by the **TNK Foundation** nearby.

As in the other 4 centers the girls will participate in the program for a period of 8 to 18 months, during which they will alternate between apprenticeship, schooling and personal development. They will receive an allowance that will increase as they move through the program. The development of the centre's professional activities should mean that the program breaks even after 3 years. In the second year 20 girls will be able to benefit from the program, and each year we hope that 15 girls will graduate from the program, either with a job, or with a realistic and lasting solution for their future and that of their children.

The communication skills and needs of the young people at Hear Us are such that it fast became apparent

that they would need a special place, just for them. When we got stuck on matters of budget we turned to

Father Henri and his congregation (below right) who, within 5 days, had offered the use of an old house, free

This project requires co-financing of €14,900 in the first year, and an intial investment of €8000.



# My.Craft

# the brand created by the young people of St John's LPC in Cebu City

A true example of business creation ... in less than 8 months. The first young people were selected in November 2010 at the Careta Cemetery in Cebu, where hundreds of families have been living for generations in conditions of extreme poverty. They survive thanks to the sale of votive candles, small bunches of flowers picked from between the stones, occasional tomb cleaning, etc. All the stands offer the same products, at the same prices, which have presumably not changed for years. From our observation it appears that by working long days without a day off, it is possible to earn just \$2-3 per day, to share between the whole family. They often have 8, 10 or 12 children, so each family member gets very little. There are visible instances of malnutrition. Despite the efforts of various associations who provide funding for school, most children over the age of 12 are no longer in school. What they learn on the street is not all good. It is said that most of the children sniff glue (rugby) or take shabu (a powerfully addictive meth stimulant), or deal drugs; earning and losing money... and often ending up in prison. The young people who have chosen to follow us to the LPC are therefore very motivated.

But the first months proved tough. "How am I supposed to stay in one place for 8 hours, concentrating on something difficult? How am I supposed to get up at the right time each morning? What will I tell my friends in the street?" Lack of motivation is the number one problem of street children. They're used to just hanging around, with no goal but to fulfill their immediate needs. And as soon as that need is satisfied the young person switches off until the next immediate need becomes apparent. And when one is hungry everything is worse – including one's perception of the reality of life: sensations change and become increasingly painful. Strong alcohol, which is extraordinarily cheap, can sooth ... consumption of alcohol is high, including among young people. But week after week in the LPC in Cebu they have worked on candle making - different candles thon those they are accustomed to seeing in the cemetery. They did their research, on the Internet and in shops. To start with they copied designs they saw elsewhere, and then they started to imagine, design, test, start again. And candle by candle their passion for the product developed, and with it came self-confidence, pride, and joy in work well done. Week by week the young people improved their English and other school subjects. As part of "Professional Training for Entrepreneurs" the young people have access to the state ALS (Alternative Learning System) which allows them to catch up on all their missed

schooling. **Melchor Billacasten** is a temp-teacher and comes to the centre twice a week. In October the young people will be taking their exams for the High School Diploma, the magic key to integration!

Basheron is an IT professor at the University of San Carlos. He generously offered to work with LP4Y to give these young people a second chance, and now gives them IT training. We contacted Myrna for her expertise in candle making, and she has become an LP4Y sponsor. Myrna's own life is a success story: she became a mother at 19, resulting in rejection by her family, and spent the next few years in the street. She made her first candle with the help of another foundation, and it all followed from there. 5 years later she was working in Manila heading up the production of decorative candles for a large international company and managing 300 employees. It's a fantastic example, one that can give hope to our young people.

These early successes have been made possible by the support we have received from the **St Jean Community**. First they made room for the LPC in their fabulous centre, and now with the help of the **Apostolic Sisters and the Fathers** they assist those young people who wish to explore and develop their faith. **Solène** and **Lucas** are now coming to the end of their missions. They leave behind them a budding business full of potential, and a group of young people set on the right path towards creating a decent future.



# "Keep going, keep going, the best is yet to come ..."



"Keep Going, Keep Going, the best is yet to come ..."

I would like to reinforce the words of Florent Callerand, founder of the Roche d'Or Community, which seem to sum up so well the short history, the challenging present and the unknown future of LP4Y Belgium. In fact, creating the necessary moral and financial support for LP4Y is fairly simple, because the project and its future are so motivating.

What could be more tangible and heart-warming for the well-off such as us to help impoverished young people to achieve some degree of human dignity and find their place in society? In addition LP4Y's founders, Jean-Marc and Laure, demonstrate such inspirational drive and conviction that we can but follow.

However, the demand and needs, and the gulf between our safe,

selfish world and the world of these young people which is growing as we speak, are such that we quickly come up against the concrete, the present, the realization that the simple equation: *Expenses + working capital = funds to be raised* is often hard, if not impossible, to tally!!

The answer of course is greater mobilization, investing more time, more conviction, more visibility, more imagination, more, more, more ... But we have reached the current limits of our existing organization. So we will need to rethink our structure, and that is our challenge for 2012, because the future lies before us! Not just the future of the young people who are counting on us, but also the future of LP4Y Belgium which must find a way to achieve its goals by going beyond its existing structure and, one way or another, find a way to ask for financial support from those organizations in a position to help. We must take courage from the recent success with the Air France Foundation and Hear Us, to convince ourselves that such things are possible.

The quality of the project, its modular nature and therefore the accessibility of small areas to be financed, the efficiency in the Philippines, the team in Brussels, the success of LP4Y France and Luxembourg; all these are indicators of short term success. We can use existing members as a springboard and a mean of engaging others. So let us open our hearts and minds, windows and doors to get as close as possible to our 2011 goals, while at the same time actively, intelligently and energetically preparing for 2012 ... our near future.

Jean-Marie Demeure, President LP4Y Belgium



### A great team of pioneers, working to help the young entrepreneurs of LP4Y

23 June 2011. After 6 hours on the chaotic road system leading out of Manila heading towards Zambales in the North West, 12 volunteers weighted down with bags set off on a courageous 2-day trek. After crossing the first rivers and streams we realized that our feet would never be dry, any more than the rest of us! 24 hours in torrential rain and thick mist, and a wind that could strip the horns from a carabao. Well, we needed an unforgettable experience to round off a year with the young people of LP4Y.

Over the next few weeks we would be going our separate ways, so we needed one final challenge! The goal was clear, as were the various steps towards achieving it, but the means were for each to find and adapt according to circumstances ... exactly reflecting our time in the Philippines with the young people LP4Y.

For each one of us after a year of LP4Y teamwork there was no hesitation concerning values: perseverance, a positive outlook, courage (even occasionally fierce determination) team spirit, good humor, and joy.

These 2 days had been organized by Jean-Baptiste, our head of micro-business development, so we should have expected some experimentation! And we had it in spades. It's just that even Jean-Baptiste had not anticipated the typhoon!

(One of the biggest in the area for some months.) But far from loosing courage this exceptional team gave its best show of generosity. We were able to achieve as a team what none of us could have managed alone, and with a joy that we will remember for a long time.

Our thanks to **Estelle** who skillfully launched the Hear Us! program in Illigan. Her good nature and ability to communicate has been a precious gift to the young people. Thank you to **Solène** for her quiet strength and sense of service to others. Thank you to **Lucas** for his unfailing sense of humor. Together they initiated the My.Craft project in Cebu, involving the young people in the project. Thank you to Grégoire and his exemplary generosity – he transformed the team. The young people of Old Balera will long remember this tall young man, with his curly blond hair and blue eyes, who shared their daily lives for a year. Thank you to the volunteers from within the Philippines, who gave a few months of their time to the young people of LP4Y: **Clara, Anne-Sophie, Elsa, Emmanuelle, Emilie, Aurélie, Clémence** and **Victor**. Thank you to **Julie** for her innovative and practical training ideas which have enriched our pilot projects. Thank you to **Marie** for her thoughtful and gentle supervision of fabulous Green Program team. Awaiting her is the Green Garden, a wonderful challenge for 2011-2012. Thank you to **Jean-Baptiste**, a key figure and unfailing optimist. Jean-Baptiste will oversee the transition with the new team for 2011-2013.

Thank you all for your generosity, you time, your trust, your openness, your energy and everything you leave us with. You have been sponsors to these young people, so often badly treated in their childhood, who are now reaching adulthood, which is at the same time demanding and full of promise.

Laure & Jean-Marc Delaporte, Directors LP4Y Foundation Inc.





### Join the fundraising team!

The fundraising commission was set up in October 2011 by members of LP4Y in France. The principle goal of the commission is to raise funds from individuals, companies, public institutions and foundations. As far as individuals are concerned it maintains contact with existing members (about 300 to date), at the same time recruiting new members through emailing and events etc. When it comes to companies it is normal practice to approach them through the foundations in charge of their humanitarian actions. The commission is made up of 7 members and meets once a month. It works closely with the team in the Philippines.

Etienne de La Rochère, President of the fundraising commission

In France in 2010 LP4Y was registered as being a general interest service, an official stamp of approval of our activities which are acknowledged as benefitting many. For French tax pavers 66% of any donation is reimbursed by the Sate in the form of a tax rebate, with a ceiling of 20% of one's taxable income. Donations made by companies can be deducted by up to 60% of the sum given, with a ceiling of o.5% of the current turnover. In Belgium we have not yet received the official general interest service label for 2011. The general interest service registration is underway in Luxembourg.

### How to get involved with excluded young people?

### Let's embark together

Become a **MEMBER** and receive the latest updates, as well as invitations to events and meetings and the general assemblies. Annual membership in France, Belgium and Luxembourg was €10 for 2011.

Become a SPONSOR by making regular or one-off donations to help create a fund base for LP4Y. You can also make gifts in kind

Become a **PARTNER** through regular or one-off contributions to the program of your choice. You will be invited to attend the meetings of the orientation committee for that program, which occur 3 times a year.

Become a CORRESPONDANT, sharing information about LP4Y with your contacts, and assisting in the organization of information and communication events. If LP4Y is not already present in your country of residence you can even help set up a new branch!

Become a **VOLUNTEER**, at any age (17-77) on a temporary or permanent basis. You can be active in Europe or Asia. Your training and social security, insurance, pension etc will be taken care of through provisions of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Don't hold back! Join LP4Y today! Email us at info@lp4y.org

Together We Can! is the LP4Y Alliance Newsletter Written, produced and edited in French and English in the Philippines by volunteers. LP4Y Foundation Inc., Valley Vista Village, Better Living, 1711 Paranaque City, Philippines.

# Planning ahead for the next 3 years with LP4Y



LP4Y is attempting to solve the complex equation of professional and social insertion of numerous young victims of exclusion in an efficient and coherent way, taking into account our ability to raise funds. If we follow the equation to its logical conclusion we should aim to :

welcome as many young people as possi-

ble without compromising the quality of our projects - take the necessary time for them to grow, without unneces-

- sarily prolonging the cost of looking after them maintain a regular flow of young people in and out of the schemes in order to ensure a manageable equilibrium of experi-
- enced and novice youth - fully finance the early stages for the young people, but also gradually cover the training costs for the coming 2-3 years using the profits of the micro projects.

To sum up, we see LP4Y today as making its maiden voyage and no longer in the launching phase. The success of this new phase lies in developing at an appropriate rate; sufficiently fast to give donors confidence in our ability to bring things to fruition, but steadily enough to ensure we have the financing to allow us to support each new entrant through to the end of his

or her time with the program.

We therefore find ourselves in a phase where we have to be strong both financially and morally, in the sense that before the end of a sufficiently meaningful first cycle we can't yet prove that we can get these young people out of their exclusion.

Keeping it together will require perseverance, careful accounting, high standards, open reassessment to best adapt to changing conditions, faith, courage, energy ... in short, all the values and qualities of LP4Y.

We put our calculations into a table. With an annual budget of approximately €160,000 covering 5 to 6 centers for 15 young people each, LP4Y can set itself the following objectives:

- taking on 60-100 young people each year
- for 18-24 months
- with an annual turnover of 30-40 young people

According to the model the cost of bringing a young person out of exclusion would be approximately €130 per month. If we achieve these objectives, if the micro projects launched through the training sessions prove lasting and profitable, then we can envisage a new development model for LP4Y whereby the 'graduates' finance in part the newcomers. More in the next Newsletter...

Hélène Renaud 🛘 Treasurer, LP4Y France 📗 📗



## Thank you to all our entrepreneurs and volunteers!



In France for nearly 2 years now, worthy Gaulois have been signing up in increasing numbers to become LP4Y members, and even sponsors. As in the other countries, be it through friendship, through a desire to help, as part of a personal quest, or simply by chance, they have taken that vital step, and joined LP4Y. We each go at

our own speed, take our own route, but they all lead to these young survivors of exclusion to whom LP4Y patiently gives back self confidence – which is all that's needed to create budding entrepreneurs. Some are obviously further along the path; the volunteers – in France, Belgium Luxembourg, the States and in particular the Philippines! Perhaps they give an hour or 2 after work, perhaps they've left everything for a year or 2 to come to the Philippines, either way they are our leading lights, our ambassadors, our hands, our eyes, our ears, our smiles. Without them we would be lost and LP4Y would perish. They bring so much to us, as they bring so much to the young people. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

Frédéric Van-Heems Vice-president LP4Y France



Forthcoming LP4Y meetings: 2012 Project and budget Paris: Thursday 13 oct. - Brussels: Tuesday 18 oct. Luxembourg: Thursday 20 oct. - Manila: Saturday 12 nov. 2011

