



## Chapter Leader Talking Points April 2014

**Featured Program – Mariposa DR Foundation - \$44,450 grant – Unleash the Leader in a Girl, Dominican Republic**  
**Sustained Program – Village Enterprise - \$15,000 grant – Budongo Forest Project, Uganda**

### **Mariposa DR Foundation – Dominican Republic**

- Mariposa means ‘butterfly’ in Spanish. The program is a transformational one that empowers girls to become leaders in their families, communities, and country.
- The program has a “do whatever it takes” approach to providing opportunities for girls to develop into global citizens, “from cradle to college”, including taking all steps necessary to impress upon families the benefits of their girls’ participation as a ‘Mariposa’.
- The DFW grant will help pay for the educational enrichment program for 150 girls for a period of one year.

### **Key Points**

- Although it is widely recognized that keeping adolescent girls in school is key to changing the cycle of poverty, little money is given to support programs that achieve this goal.
- When families see value for themselves from a girl’s involvement in an educational program, they will support her and encourage her to continue participating.
- A successful program accepts that high-risk girls may falter and provides services to help them, if they become pregnant or develop HIV, in order to keep them in the program.
- In a high-risk population, such as the poor in the Dominican Republic, adolescent girls are easy targets for the sex trade or child pornography trades that thrive in many international tourist destinations.

### **Village Enterprise, Uganda**

This is the second year of a three-year grant. With sustained funding of \$45,000 over 3 years from Dining for Women, Village Enterprise will provide seed capital for 180 women-led businesses (3 women in each business), formation of 18 Business Savings Groups, and business training, mentoring, and conservation education for these women. This will impact 540 women directly and indirectly affect 2,700 within the community.

Through the Budongo Forest Project in Western Uganda, a partnership with the Jane Goodall Institute, women entrepreneurs receive business and conservation training with the goal of providing sustainable livelihoods and raising environmental awareness. This is done through their enterprise model using tools of Business, Financial, and Conservation Education, conditional seed-capital, mentoring, and savings.

**We're so glad you asked!** (Questions submitted on Meeting Evaluation Forms may be answered here.)

**A Chapter Leader asked:**

***If Mariposa DR Foundation accepts all the girls in a family, what happens to the boys?***

Patricia Thorndike Suriel, Founder and Executive Director of the Mariposa DR Foundation, answered:

*“There are many more opportunities for boys in our community. Many of them have jobs as shoe shine boys or surf or kite school assistants on the beach or selling things. This is not to say that they do not struggle as well, however we believe that girls will get us the highest return on our investment. There are other programs that focus on general youth however we fill a specific need in just targeting girls. Girls are missing out on available youth programs because they are being kept at home. This is something that is common practice all over the world - making boys’ education a priority and not girls. We are changing this by working with parents to help them see the value of girls outside of the home.*

*Our programs and investment in girls is meant to have a long-lasting effect for generations. The girls will be the future mothers of boys and girls and we see the urgency in focusing our efforts on this part of the population. There will always be a tremendous amount of need in all families, but we cannot realistically solve everything and we see our value in providing a service that no other organization is doing. In the long-term all families will benefit from educating and empowering girls because the future generations will have healthier, educated, income-earning mothers.*

*Yes, this may mean that sometimes the chores don't get done or that other arrangements need to be made for male siblings, however, parents are now seeing the long-term benefits of having their girls involved in this because they are not having babies at 15 and continuing the cycle of poverty. They are empowered, in school and on their way to becoming successful adults and will have fewer, healthier children when they are mature and ready. We believe that by staying laser focused on the needs of girls, we are affecting positive change that will last for generations, not just offering a band-aid solution that will temporarily alleviate some of the many hardships families living in extreme poverty endure on a day to day basis.”*

### **Meeting Ideas - Take it and make it your own –**

*(Please share YOUR ideas through the Online Meeting Evaluation Form on each Program page. You can adapt any of these ideas to suit your chapter’s needs and interests.)*

#### **Fundraising Idea – Loose Change**

We came across this idea from Chapter Leader Polly Ferguson, written in a 2009 blog, and decided to revive it.

*“Last month I set out a loose change jar next to the DFW donation basket and sign in sheet. I suggested members put their loose change into the jar then we would count the money in October and send it to Dining for Women for their annual campaign. I thought this would be another painless way to give; another way for my small contribution to combine with other small contributions to make a big impact. What can you do with your loose change? Can you collect money from the washing machine, change from your morning coffee or from your afternoon vending machine run, or your leftover coins at the end of the day, to put in your own loose change jar? Can your chapter set out a loose change jar next to their sign in sheet to collect this money? Would you consider donating that money to the DFW annual campaign?”*

#### **Our Vision**

*We envision a world where millions of people’s lives have been transformed and extreme poverty has been reduced because Dining for Women connected people in creative, powerful ways that assure gender equality.*

#### **Our Mission**

*Through collective giving, Dining for Women inspires, educates, and engages people to invest in programs that make a meaningful difference for women and girls living in extreme poverty*

#### **Our Culture**

*In all we do, we model our deep belief in collaboration, education, inspiration, and transformation.*

#### **Reminders**

- **Please mail chapter donations within five days of meeting.**
- **Please fill out a Meeting Evaluation Form.**