



Fundación Tradiciones Mayas

Tejiendo la identidad cultural con oportunidad

Weaving culture with opportunity

Annual Report 2010

Introduction

2010 has been a year of changes for FTM. With the passing of founder Jane Mintz in late November 2009 the Foundation was forced to be creative in discovering a way to carry on Jane's vision without the support of our driving force and largest donor.

Structurally there have been many changes that are enabling the Foundation to address issues of sustainability and to ensure that the legacy of Jane will continue to have a profound impact on the lives of the women to whom she dedicated so much of her life.

Although facing many challenges with the loss of Jane, with the support of generous donors and sale of Fair Trade goods, FTM was able to successfully implement various social projects in 2010 that enable us each day to move closer to our vision.



Mission

To create opportunities for Maya Women in Guatemala through Fair Trade and social programs in education, health and development of handicraft skills through both application of ancestral knowledge of backstrap loom weaving and other skills to improve their quality of life.

Vision

To be a leading Fair Trade organization that offers high quality products and services.

Maya communities in Guatemala socially and economically developed in a sustainable manner, preserving their culture and assuring that their communities have access to a good quality of life.

Brief History

In 1988, Maya Traditions founder Jane Mintz, an experienced social worker (MSW Columbia University) and weaver herself, began working with indigenous women artisans who were living in poverty after surviving decades of armed conflict in Guatemala. Jane observed that their skill of backstrap weaving was a chance for them to earn a stable income for their families while working from home doing what they were already good at. Maya Traditions was founded to help these skilled artisans succeed and preserve their cultures through access to a Fair Trade global marketplace. Today Maya Traditions is a Guatemalan Foundation which provides social service and scholarships supported by the production of Fair Trade products and grants from several foundations and individuals. We provide consistent work for 85 Maya backstrap weavers and their families. In addition, we strive to improve their quality of life by offering assistance in the areas deemed most valuable by the weaving groups, access to education and health and further development of artistry skills.

Statement by Benefactors and Founders Board

highlighting some aspect of the foundation or discussing the importance of philanthropy

***Murray

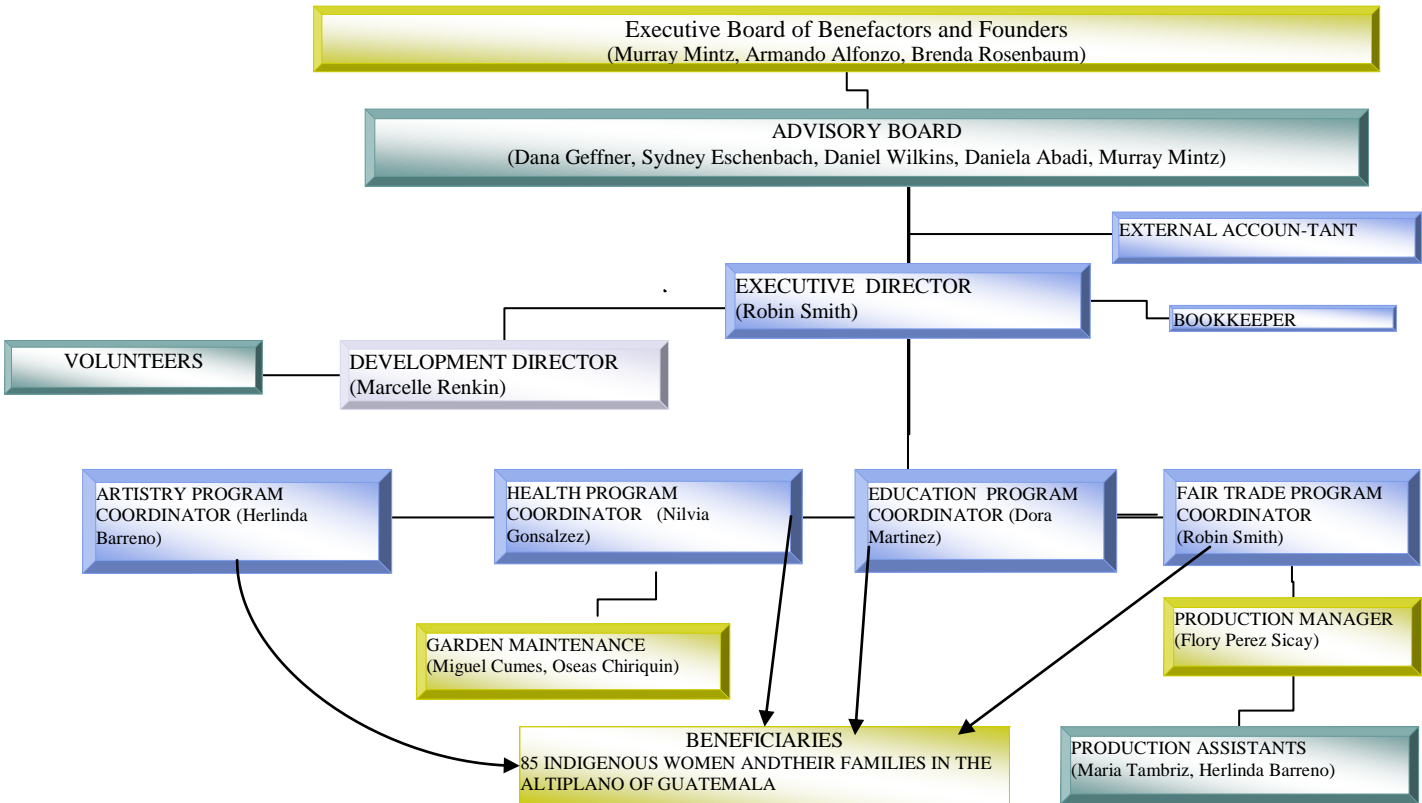
Foundation Governing Structure

Executive Board of Founders and Benefactors
 Murray Mintz, Armando Alfonso and Brenda Rosenbaum

Advisory Board

President: Murray Mintz
Vice President: Dan Wilkens
Treasurer: Sydney Eschenbauch
Secretary: Dana Geffner
Board Member: Daniela Abadi

Organizational Flow Chart



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Blog: <http://www.mayatraditionsfoundation.blogspot.com>

Gifts Received in 2010

FTM is proud to have increased support for its projects in 2010 and thanks the following organizations and institutions for their support in 2010:



TIDES FOUNDATION

First People's Worldwide Fund of the Tides Foundation



COUNTERPART INTERNATIONAL
In partnership for results that last.



Individual Donors

FTM also thanks the following individual donors for their generous contribution in 2010; Adolph Rosekrans, Joe Pogar, Chris Fellure, Armando Montalvo, Kirstine Jungkurth, Robert H Miller, Brigit Beyea, Monique Zenga, Scott Norvell, Myung J, Lee, Kimberly Sanchez, Rachel Jo Sanchez, Kate Thunderbolt, Myra McGuinness, Linda Hayes, Timothy and Nina Lannan, Janice Goldfarb, Wendy Lichtman, Pamela Miller, Kate Bennett and Phil Hazelton

Key Grants in 2010

Artistry Development Program

Design and Design Skill Development Workshop Series- Fifteen women representatives from the 6 communities FTM works with were chosen to attend a series of workshops that explored techniques and elements of colour and product design. Workshops titles included Creation and Combination of Colours, Exploring Design Tendencies, Designing Products for Exportation and Adding Value to Products for Foreign Markets. This project has had a major impact on the lives of the women artisans who have participated and they have expressed that they feel that they have been able to further clarify and understand the objectives, goals and commitment required to make the project a success. In being able to better understand, the women have been able to work more efficiently and achieve more than they imagined for



Above: Women learn about colour combinations

both themselves and their artisan groups in regards to learning more about design techniques and understanding the concept of global markets for their work. The positive outcome from the project has been high levels of participation from the women and the enthusiasm that they have displayed as well as a plethora of designs that the women have created independently, some of which have been incorporated into the FTM line. This project has allowed FTM to come closer to its vision of empowerment and independence for the artisans we work with as well as laying the groundwork for them for greater access to the global Fair Trade market. This workshop series was generously funded by the COMO Foundation, a FTM supporter since 2007.

Community Health Program

FTM is pleased in 2010 to have completed a 12 month project working with Traditional Mayan Healers (Aq'jonomeles) and youth in order to promote and pass on traditional knowledge about the use of medicinal plants for healing common diseases. With the support of the *First People's Worldwide Fund of the Tides Foundation*, FTM launched the 12 month Natural Medicine Project from April 2009-2010. Fifteen traditional healers and five young adults from ten communities in the Lake Atitlán region of Guatemala were selected to participate in the project. The Maya healers, which are all generally referred to as Ajq'omanals, included Ajq'ijes (spiritual guides), Iyoms (midwives), Chapalb'aqs (bonesetters or traumatologists), Ch'ajal b'oq'ochs (eye specialist), and Chayeros (blood specialist).

In its first year, the project achieved great success in strengthening the knowledge of the healers and youth participants, establishing a network of natural medicine practitioners in the Lake Atitlan region, preserving and promoting knowledge of traditional medical practices, and increasing access to natural health care in ten indigenous communities. These Ajq'omanals and youth participated in four workshops held by FTM to share and improve their knowledge on topics such as natural and Maya medicine, prevention and treatment of common illnesses, making medicinal plant products, and promoting traditional medicine in the communities. The workshops further developed their natural medicine knowledge and created a space for them to share their traditional practices and experiences. Youth participants were paired with a mentor whom they worked with throughout the workshops as well as in the communities. Equipped with new knowledge and skills, these youth and their mentors are currently facilitating educational presentations on traditional medicine in six schools within the rural communities where FTM works.

FTM is proud to have received follow up funding for the project which will run from November 2010 to November 2011. The project is well underway with the termination of an in-depth diagnostic study of 10 communities to determine levels of access to health and areas of interest to further promote and preserve traditional knowledge of medicinal practices.

Formal and Informal Education Program

In 2010, FTM was able to offer a total of 132 educational scholarships to students from both primary and secondary levels. Since its inception in 1997, the Scholarship Program continues to benefit the sons and daughters of the artisan women with whom we work on the production of Fair Trade Products. An integral part of the Foundation's Education Program is the informal education that we offer to the youth receiving scholarships. In 2010, students participated in a series of workshops and trainings in order build their capacity for leadership and initiative with the long term goal of helping them become capable and well respected leaders in their communities. FTM was very fortunate to be able to work with workshop facilitator, Tereso Joj Cosme, *Director of Projects and Deputy Director of the Universidad del Valle of Guatemala in Solola*. Tereso has over 20 years experience working with community projects and has been an active participant in indigenous organisations as well as cultural, academic and

scientific organisations throughout Guatemala.

In March 2010, 58 youth from junior and senior high levels participated in the *'Change Starts with Us* workshop, led by representatives from the *Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos* (Human Rights Ombudsmen Office) and *CALDH*, (Legal Centre for Human Rights) located in Sololà. Through a process of consciousness raising the youth have been able to build self esteem and are continuously working to become valued community members.

In June 2010, 10 scholarship students from 9th grade attended the *Exploring Career Options Workshop* with the objective of providing information about realities in the Guatemalan work force such as; unemployment, Lucrative Careers, the Job Market and Competitive Advantage. Tereso was able to present the themes in a way that motivated students who are on the brink of deciding what career to study (In Guatemala, students enter specialised careers in 10th grade). FTM's goal with this workshop was to encourage students to think about the diversity of careers that exist and where this can lead them in the future. Also on June 8, students who graduated at the end of 2010 attended the *Becoming a Successful Professional Workshop* to help prepare them for entry into the formal work place. Students presented their resumes for analysis and were very open to suggestion on how to improve them and make them more attractive to potential employers. Students also participated in mock interviews as an exercise to help them prepare for the real situation. Students gained an insight into the Guatemalan education system and received many useful tips on how new teacher graduates can navigate the complicated process of trying to secure placements in government schools.



Another program held this year was the *Youth Leadership and Initiative Project*, which was developed in order to inspire Guatemalan youth to become proactive leaders in their communities. In total, 12 people participated in the project. One student representative from each of the 6 FTM communities participated in all the workshops and will be coordinating a Community Service Project by implementing newly acquired skills and knowledge while organising and mobilising other youth and community members. One representative from

Each of the artisan groups was also invited to participate in order to assure active participation of women in all the processes of development and implementation of community projects. At the last workshop in the series, students presented their ideas and progress. In 2011 and 2012 they will begin working on their community service projects that are the culmination of the application of knowledge acquired..

Support for these programs include the following groups: The *Maya Educational Foundation* has generously supported Education Program Activities since 2007, including direct scholarships for indigenous youth to continue studies as well as support for mentoring programs, workshops and trainings. FTM has also been working with *Greater Good.org™* since 2009 through their website *Gifts that Give More™*, to raise funds to support education program activities. Through additional fundraising efforts, FTM has also received support from individual donors to be able to continue promoting access to education for Maya youth.

2010 Graduates

In 2010, FTM was proud to see 8 students graduate from high school; Rodolfo Guarcax Panjoj from the community of Chuacruz was one of them. Rodolfo is 18 years old, has 5 siblings and has been receiving a scholarship from Maya Traditions since he began studying at primary school, which he says has been a huge help to his parents. He would like to go on to University and study environmental engineering; his dream is to enter the University of Costa Rica, but their grant only covers 60% of the cost. In 2011 FTM hopes to be able to begin to offer competitive A few months ago, Rodolfo took part on a tree replanting project that aimed to stop the deforestation that causes landslides in the area. The participants planted 10,000 trees. His main plan when he finishes his studies is to start a profitable business that generates jobs for the people of his community. He wants to start small, creating a chicken farm business to sell eggs to retailers and invest the profit to keep developing. For now, Rodolfo has secured a job working with the local council and MAGA (Ministry of Agriculture) and will begin in 2011.



Fair Trade Program

As members of the Guatemala Export Agency, **AGEXPORT**, (<http://www.export.com.gt/Portal/Home.aspx>), FTM benefited from a project that provided an international designer, Colvin English of **BY Hand Consulting**, (<http://www.byhandconsulting.com/>) in collaboration with Guatemalan designers, to review current products, make recommendations, and do follow up on amendments to current products in order to create a more competitive edge for products to be shown at the New World Crafts Fair in Antigua, Guatemala.

Also, **Counterpart International**, a **USAID** funded project, made it possible for FTM to participate in the New World Crafts Fair in Antigua in September 2010. This was the second year of participation and is an important platform for FTM to be able to attract potential new clients, thus furthering its goal of economic empowerment and promotion of the Fair Trade model.

In December of 2010, FTM held an official launch of its new Fair Trade Project: **Reciclando Para Mi Mundo**. FTM held a benefit concert and art auction to raise funds and awareness for this project. The project will include an environmental education segment, through collaboration with **Vivamos Mejor**, which will address the environmental concerns in our communities, as well as help our communities work on reduce, reusing, and recycling. The Fair Trade component of this project will include trainings in collection and cleaning of plastics as well as techniques in backstrap weaving and crochet with plastics through the help of two Guatemalan designers. These products will then be for sale through Maya Traditions and presented at the San Francisco GreenFest, New York Gift Show, and the New World Crafts Fair at the end of 2011.

To increase the visibility of the FTM Fair Trade Program, FTM also launched a catalog through PeopleLink (get address) and is in the process of updating our catalog on our website: <http://www.mayatraditions.org>.

On the 23 and 24th of July FTM participated in the first **Fair Trade Event** organized by the Ministry of Economics (MINECO) and the Artisan Association, Aj Quen, in Chimaltenango. There were both national and international guests and this provided an opportunity to network and become more active participants in the development of a Fair Trade movement within Guatemala.



Above: FTM Executive Director, Robin Smith and Production Manager, Flory Perez at a Fair Trade event in Chimaltenango

FTM participated in the **Youth United Across Borders (YUAB) project from January to July 2010**. Recent graduate from our scholarship program, Nicolasa Vasquez from San Juan La Laguna, was chosen to coordinate a project that promoted understanding and exchange of experiences for youth from the USA and Guatemala in regards to their involvement in the Fair Trade Movement. Funded by **Fair Trade Resource Network (FTRN)** the project aimed to educate youth as well as have them lobby local and national officials 'rade business model. Nicolasa attended the

MINECO **Fair Trade Event** in CChimaltenango in July where she was able to publicize the project to the Director of the **Guatemalan Inter-Institutional Committee for Fair and Just Trade**. Apart from educating youth, coordinating international pen pals, and lobbying officials to recognize the benefits Fair Trade brings to artisans, the project benefited the artisan group in San Juan La Laguna by helping them further understand the concept of Fair Trade. In 2011, we hope to have Nicolasa work closely with all artisan groups to further educate them about the concept of Fair Trade.

Staff Development

In November Production Manager Flory Perez Sicay was able to attend a two day Conference in Lima Peru funded by the US Embassy in Guatemala. The conference, **Mujeres Empresariales en Las Americas (Business Women in the Americas)**, In September 2010, Herlinda Barreno, Artistry Development Program Coordinator, assisted a "Exchange" organised by Mankatitlan in Huehuetenango. Herlinda was able to share her experiences and learn more about how women artisans are working hard to fight their way out of poverty through income generating activities like the Oyster Mushroom Project and Basket Making.



Above: FTM Production Manager, Flory Perez, (far right) at the conference in Lima Peru.

Volunteers and Interns

In 2010, FTM was fortunate to have a wide variety of volunteers from Ireland, United States, Australia, Scotland and Spain to help the organization in such areas as; Grant Writing, Fair Trade Market research, English classes, health program, fundraising and development, educational tours, documentation of projects, and translation of documents. FTM highly values the contribution of volunteers and is eternally grateful to the following people for their contribution; Jen Manning, Ed Kennedy, Rachel Jo Sanchez, Ellen Mitchell, Esti Mugabatz, Carrie Laing, Lillyanne Tyler – Daigle, Elspeth Lamont, Taryn Lane, Caroline Whitson and Erica Bustinza. We have begun a new blog site (<http://www.mayatraditionsfoundation.blogspot.org>) that is maintained by staff and volunteers to update the public on FTM work in our communities.

Local Internship Program

FTM was to be able to host three local interns whilst providing an opportunity for these students to gain some professional experience. FTM always benefits from the extra help keen interns have to offer. The 2010 interns included: Beverly Citalan, who is studying Home Economics, Esthefany Pacal, who is studying to receive a certificate in Community Development, and Alejandra Tirado, who is studying to be a Bilingual secretary.

Financial institutions holding the foundation's funds

Maya Educational Foundation (Fiscal Sponsor in the United States), Jane Mintz Trust

A report from the independent public accountant who audits the books, accompanied by financial statements (ask Nicolas)