

## NEW Pathways to Enterprise™: October 2014 *Learning to Livelihood Program Report*

Within a two week period (October 13-24, 2014), 113 women and one man, across two islands and four barangays, participated in various phases of the NEW Pathways' *Learning to Livelihood* Program. Participants were grateful for opportunities to improve their lives and those of their families. Many told us that NEW Pathways was the first organization to offer them such possibilities. October 12-13, 2014: Christine Nielsen (Chris), President of NEW Pathways, departed the Honolulu for Manila, then to Negros Island. The full *Learning to Livelihood* Program consists of 4 levels: Business Idea Generation; Livelihood Skill Training; Business Skills Training; and Business Start-Up.  
\* A barangay (brgy.) is the smallest governmental unit in the Philippines, referring to the village/community level.

Dates/Participants Locations/Activities	<b>NEW Pathways' <i>Learning to Livelihood</i> Program in Action – Spring 2014</b>	
<p>October 13-15</p> <p>20 participants</p> <p>Brgy. Alijis Negros Island</p> <p><b>IdeaShop Level 2: Livelihood Skills Training</b></p>	<p>Arman Pedro, manager of our Valladolid IdeaShops: Empowering Women (VIEW) series, served as the session organizer, in collaboration with Chris Nielsen, and Shirley Nacion, Valladolid municipal councilor. We were hosted in the garden of Brgy. Councilor, Grace Teodosio. Brgy.</p> <p>Twenty women in Brgy. Alijis participated in Rice Products skills training with Chef Ronnie Guance, President of the Negros Occidental Food Producers Association, and a successful businessman selling organic foods and spices. Ronnie shared his recipes for 4 rice products: Pop rice, Ampao, Pulvoron, and Puto. Women worked in 4 groups during "hands-on" sessions in which they prepared the foods under Ronnie's supervision. The women clearly enjoyed working with Ronnie. On November 3-4 Alijis women will participate in IdeaShop Level 3: Business Skill Training with Joseph Guevarra, Assistant Manager, Client Services, Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation (NWTF).</p>	 <p>The Alijis Rice Products group shown here was so very proud. Between the first and second day of training, they had already sold everything they had produced!</p>

**October 15**

Bacolod  
Negros Island

**Meeting at Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation to discuss our partnership; especially plans for our March 2015 Medical Mission.**

Before joining the women in Alijis for Day 3 of their Livelihood Skills Training, Chris met at NWTF headquarters in Bacolod with Corazon Henares, Deputy Director for Operations, and Manny Margate, Head of Client Services, to discuss plans for the 2015 NEW Pathways/NWTF Medical Mission. Drs. Arata (internist), Bird (gynecologist), and O'Reilly (dental specialist) from Annapolis, Maryland, will travel with Chris to participate alongside NWTF nurses and local doctor volunteers. The Medical Mission will be launched on Women's Day (March 8), an annual celebration event sponsored by NWTF, beginning with a caravan and parade from Bacolod to the Hacienda of former mayor of Valladolid, Ricardo Presbitero.



Pictured here from left to right: NWTF Director of Special Projects, Corazon Henares, Chris Nielsen, Suzette Gaston, and Manny Margate.

**October 16-17**

34 participants

Brgy. Tabao Proper  
Negros Island

**IdeaShop Level 3: Business Skills Training**

Thirty four women in Brgy. Tabao Proper participated in our IdeaShop Level 3: Business Skills Training with Joseph Guevarra, NWTF. Since receiving their Level 2 macramé handbag-making skill training in September, the majority of these women have participated in NEW Pathways' mentoring program, under the supervision of Lucia Guevarra (our macramé business trainer), and her husband, Joseph, NWTF's business planning specialist. During this period they worked with a business development plan demonstrating how each woman could grow their business over a six-week period, earning at least 2,250 Php, working 20 hours per week. This total corresponds to a daily rate of 150 Php, which is significantly higher than anything our participants were earning prior to their training. Actual results for a number of women are higher. Donna Perez' sales were 2,650 Php during the 1st two weeks! Participants have begun marketing their bags in foreign markets where family members work as overseas Filipino workers. Current destinations for the bags include Dubai, Saudi Arabia, and Singapore. These women are an inspiration to all women of Tabao Proper.



NEW Pathways purchased 34 beautiful macramé handbags made by our participants on October 17, preceding the NEW Pathways graduation ceremony. NEW Pathways has begun to explore markets in the U.S. for these handbags.

<p><b>October 18</b></p> <p>26 participants</p> <p>Brgy. Sagua Banwa Negros Island</p> <p><b>IdeaShop Level 4: Business Start-Up</b></p>	<p>Twenty six women of Brgy. Sagua Banwa are in the Business Start-Up phase of their soap-making livelihood, specializing now in liquid detergent and fabric conditioner. (We are dropping powdered detergent due to product quality issues expressed by our customers.) Linda Dormido, a successful business woman with Mom Cares soap products, and a Department of Trade and Industry trainer, served as our trainer in Sagua Banwa in September. She is continuing to mentor our groups through the business start-up phase. Currently women are working in groups of 5 or 6. Each group reported on their progress, including sales, and any obstacles they faced.</p>	
<p><b>October 19</b></p> <p><b>Strategic Planning Meeting with partners in the Valladolid IdeaShops: Empowering Women (VIEW) series: Shirley Nacion, Valladolid municipal councilor. Arman Pedro, local manager; Gerin Vergara, Dept. of Trade and Industry; and Joseph Guevarra, NWTF, and his wife, Lucia.</b></p>	<p>NEW Pathways' 3-year strategic plan was the focus of our discussion. We reviewed how we are doing now versus one year ago. There was general agreement on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improvements on our training procedures and content.</li> <li>2. More women are being trained per year.</li> <li>3. The quality of our graduates' work is improving; designs are being developed. Families are getting involved. Men are the doing more design work.</li> <li>4. Pacing is better. We are reaching more communities, more women and delivering the full Learning to Livelihood program with less 'downtime' between levels.</li> </ol> <p>Following our meeting, the team took Chris to participate in Mascara Festival activities. Little did she know that she would be in Mascara costume with a troupe of dancers!</p>	
<p><b>October 20- Negros Island to Manila</b></p>	<p>Chris flew from Silay airport, Negros Island, to Manila, in order to catch a 5:15 am flight to Calbayog, Samar Island the next morning.</p>	

October 21-22

34 participants  
(33 women and 1 man)

Brgy. Danao-1, Samar  
Island

IdeaShop Level 4:  
Business Start-Up

Participants in Danao-1 graduated from our *Learning to Livelihood* program, and are moving forward from pig-fattening to sow-litter-raising, with our first piglets to be born in January 2015. Our October program featured training by Emma Morales, micro-entrepreneur of the year award winner. This marked Emma's second visit to Samar Island from her home on Negros. Her first trip had been to evaluate our hogs as future sows. The October trip included her training on preparations for sow-litter raising. Emma will return in January for 10 days to be with the women during the birth of early litters, and to provide hands-on training on proper birthing techniques.

We evaluated the feed company that had been working with us because we had received multiple complaints that JM Poultry failed on numerous occasions to deliver feed when it was scheduled, had been supplying gruel to the pigs—even though this should have stopped at least a month earlier, and had not made preparations for insemination of our pigs as was originally promised. Through Emma's contacts, we were able to contact B-Meg, a division of San Miguel Industries, who joined us immediately in Danao-1 to work out plans for their services over the coming months.

NEW Pathways provided an additional grant of \$716.00 to pay for feed for the sows up until time of their piglets' delivery, ~ 165 days after the current feed supply runs out. In addition, NEW Pathways will be providing a 100,000 Php (\$2,380) loan to SAKADA, the women's association we helped to establish to manage this project, through an account set up for this project at the Dunganon Bank branch office. Repayment is due when the piglets reach 37-40 days of age, when they can each be sold for 2,500 Php. Each group promises to sell piglets @ 2,500 Php each to repay its share of the loan. The piglets covered under this loan are to be sold to a SAKADA designated purchaser who will agree to deposit the loan repayment to NEW Pathways to Enterprise in SAKADA's Dunganon account.



Chris, Joseph Guevarra (NWTF) and Emma Morales, traveled through the barangay to visit all 10 groups of NEW Pathways' hog-raisers and their hogs. Pictured above are Group 5 members and their children; Emma, far right.

**Chris Nielsen's Trip Summary:** "It was a fulfilling, joyful, exhausting 2 weeks on Negros and Samar Islands. I am so deep down happy!! So many women told me what a difference NEW Pathways is bringing to their lives. Joseph Guevarra, our partner at NWTF, and Emma Morales, micro-entrepreneur of the year award winner for the Philippines, told me there is no other organization like NEW Pathways because we offer complete nurturing support from business idea generation through training, start-up capital support, and business development mentoring. Emma told me so with tears running down her cheeks. To hear this from her – a successful entrepreneur whose business began with 1 piglet on credit in 1989 to a hog-raising business comprised of multiple farms employing 20 people today – means the world to me.

Wait 'til you hear about plans for our March 2015 Medical Mission, a caravan parade from Bacolod to the former mayor's hacienda for Women's Day on March 8, and a request for a shop to showcase all of our women's products on a major road artery in Valladolid!"

October 23-24  
Homeward Bound!

Chris departed on an early flight from Calbayog to Manila, through LA and Detroit to BWI. Thanks to UTi United States, Chris was able to clear customs ~ 10 minutes with 14 handwoven and 46 macrame handbags – NEW Pathways' second commercial importing activity.