

Young changemakers around the world forming the global Youth Venture movement

As Youth Venture expands globally – now to 14 countries on five continents – Youth Venturers are beginning to come together and form a global community of young changemakers, who collectively are transforming the youth years into a time of leadership and positive social change. Created by Ashoka, the world's leading association of social entrepreneurs ten years ago, the number of youth-led Ventures in YV has nearly doubled in the past year, and the Venturers have come together for the first time in a multi-language YV online community, www.GenV.net.

The Venturers are showing that a small investment in young people's initiative can lead to dramatic impact on them as they become skilled, confident changemakers for life, on their communities as they create change and inspire other young people to do the same, and on society as the number of changemakers in the world multiplies, who will solve the growing and increasingly complex problems our society faces.

This newsletter highlights the initiative of many Venture teams around the world, as well as the impact of the global movement of Venturers in all parts of society.



Youth Venture is in 14 countries, reaching over 300,000 young people



The Young Changemakers I Met Around the World

by Kyle Taylor

"I am powerful," Marc said in Brazil. I heard this message from hundreds of changemakers I met around the world. A few years ago I became a Venturer when, at age 19, I launched a tutoring and mentoring program. My interest in creating change and inspiring others to do the same has steadily grown since. I had been hearing about Venturers launching around the world and this global movement that was beginning to grow, and I decided I had to see it for myself. So I came to Youth Venture with an idea: what if I travel around the world to meet my fellow changemakers and capture their stories? The Dream it. Do it. World Tour was born. I took off around the globe for four months, sleeping on couches and floors, traveling in rickshaws, and living on rice. And I encountered the most inspiring changemakers I could have ever imagined.

My first stop was Argentina, where I met Ayelen and Florencia, two teenagers who had become fed up with the lack of recycling programs in their school and community. The young women

launched Basura Verde Proyecto En Accion (Green Team Action Project), a campaign to educate their school and wider community about the benefits of recycling. At the same time, they convinced the school's administration to install recycling bins throughout their campus. Just as you'd expect, they aren't stopping there. They want their city government to clean up the local trash dump, and they've gotten the community to rally support for change. They're true leaders in every sense of the word. Time and time again I met young people like them from India to Thailand to Brazil. "This isn't a phase, young people being engaged," a young woman from India told me. "This is who we are as a generation."

I will never forget these incredible moments of connecting with my kindred spirits from every walk of life. We're doing more than just coming together to create change. We're defining an entire generation.

Youth Venture *on the move*

MTV, Gates and YV Inspire Youth-Led Solutions for Latino Academic Achievement



Peques Chavos Fundación de Futbol

50 Venture teams and led to an additional 32 Ventures launching across the U.S. that help Latino students finish school ready for college or work. Five Venture teams were selected to each receive a \$5,000 team scholarship, and one winning team was featured in a news segment on MTV Tr3s. The official list of winning teams is available on www.GenV.net.

One of the top five Tu Voz My Venture teams is Peques Chavos Fundación de Futbol (Kids and Youth Soccer Foundation) in Southampton, New York. The Venture motivates Latino youth to stay in school and continue their studies through their participation in a soccer club, which encourages and supports students to strive for scholarships and pursue higher education. The Venture helps students improve their grades and encourages parents to get involved and support their children's educational aspirations.

MTV's new bilingual channel, MTV Tr3s, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation teamed up with Youth Venture to address one of the nation's most challenging issues of the Latino high school dropout rate. According to research conducted by *think* MTV, in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the National Governors Association in 2005, more than 8 in 10 Latinos want to go to college and see it as an important part of getting ahead in life. Yet the Manhattan Institute reports that only 52% of Latino students graduate from high school with a regular diploma. Only 20% of students who started public high school graduate college ready.

MTV and Gates partnered with Youth Venture to invest in young people's own ideas to address the tough educational challenges that Latino teens face. The Tu Voz My Venture initiative officially launched

CNN Goes Inside YV-Thailand for a Year

In August, CNN International (CNNI) launched "Be the Change," a global campaign to cover the stories of six individuals from around the world who are leading social change. Phonchan Kraiwatnatsorn ("Newey"), the director of the Youth Venture program in Thailand, is one of the six being profiled. For one year, Newey will share her everyday life and interactions with Thai Venturers on air and through the CNN.com website at <http://edition.cnn.com/CNNI/Programs/bethechange/newey/>. This partnership between YV and CNNI will allow viewers to experience the YV movement in Thailand from behind the scenes and watch it develop on the ground.



"The critical factor for success of any human grouping - be it a company or a country - will be the proportion of changemakers it has to develop new ideas, take initiative and lead."

-Bill Drayton
Founder of Youth Venture

Leading companies make the case for more changemakers in the world

The **business sector** is at the leading edge of recognizing the need for more changemakers in society, as they realize that the key to their competitive advantage will be the innovation and initiative of their talent. By investing in building the supply of young changemakers who are powerful now, the companies will have the pool of talented leaders they will need to remain successful in the future. It is not surprising that much of Youth Venture's global expansion has come about through the investment of some of the leading companies in the world.

Staples Foundation for Learning renewed its commitment to support Youth Venture's global expansion by providing an additional \$500,000 in funding to expand to two new countries, Canada and Belgium. Staples Associates engaged in Youth Venture by participating in YV selection panels, providing expert advice to Venturers, and especially by young Staples Associates launching their own Ventures through Youth Venture.



Staples Business Depot Canada President, Steve Matyas, presents an investment to YV in Canada

The grand prize, a \$5,000 shopping spree at a local Staples store, was awarded to Kyle Freas, whose Venture **Youth Together** has engaged 50,000 young people from 70 schools in community service to help abused, homeless and critically ill children.

The **Staples-Youth Venture** collaboration held its first "That Was Easy Competition" among U.S. Venture teams to showcase how their Ventures have created impact in making life easier for others. Five finalist teams were featured on ABC News Now, and each was awarded \$1,000 plus a \$100 Staples gift card. The grand

News from the U.S.

The United Way-Youth Venture partnership spread to Des Moines, Louisville, Boston and Worcester this year as more United Ways looked to Youth Venture to connect with the youth in their communities in a wholly different way from ever before. Spearheaded by United Way of North Central Massachusetts, which celebrated its fifth year of building a local movement of changemakers with Youth Venture this year, United Ways across the country are working with YV to invest in cultivating young changemakers to address the many social challenges their communities face.

Youth Venture launched the New York Venture Initiative in September, partnering with 30 schools across New York City to reach thousands of young people. Two universities in New York, Pace University and New York University, have forged key partnerships with YV to encourage their own students as well as the surrounding youth community to start social Ventures through YV and to see how important it is to be a changemaker in order to be successful in college, career and life.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation gave Youth Venture its largest grant of \$1.2 million to build its program in the U.S. This partnership underscores RWJF's goals of sourcing and understanding youth-led ideas for addressing the social challenges they face, and exploring where young people are found today and where technology will take youth leadership in the future. RWJF's investment helps YV to better support vulnerable youth populations in successfully launching Ventures in the online and offline worlds.

PepsiCo invested in bringing the Youth Venture program to Chile this year. With PepsiCo's support, Youth Venture launched 18 Ventures and seeded the YV community in Chile. For PepsiCo, this was an opportunity to support innovation in its future talent pool in Chile as well as enhance the skills, learning and loyalty of its current employees through their participation in the Youth Venture program. Youth Venture and PepsiCo plan to expand the partnership to new countries in Latin America next year.

Youth Venture and Starbucks launched in October a "Dream it. Do it. Tour" to inspire and support young people across Washington State to launch Ventures with YV. The partnership gives Starbucks the opportunity to connect with and play a positive, inspiring role in the family-centered communities it serves while also providing new and meaningful ways for its Partners (employees) to engage in the community, including launching their own Ventures with YV. The Tour kicked off with a big event for 120 young people in Seattle and then continued in communities across the state. Two of the fifteen Venture teams that will launch through the Tour will be featured as part of Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz's weekly message to all Starbucks Partners to highlight the power of youth leading positive change.

Venturers Ignite First Venturer Fair in Brazil

In October, the Venturers in Brazil came together in a Venturer Fair and set off the YV Brazil movement. The Fair kicked off with a panel discussion, "Entrepreneurs: Then and Now," by Pablo Magallanes, General Manager of Officenet Brazil (a Staples subsidiary); Rai, a soccer athlete/entrepreneur; Luciana Martinelli, an Ashoka Fellow; and Josy, a Brazilian Venturer. The panelists described how their own transformative experiences as changemakers in their youth have led them to become the entrepreneurs they are today. Pablo Magallanes summarized the importance of the Fair by saying, "Being a changemaker helps with success in your career, community and life. Can you imagine what would be accomplished if every young Brazilian became a changemaker?"



Brazilian soccer star Rai enjoys Venture team Scientific Joke's "experiment," which teaches science through games

First Venture Teams Get Off Ground in South Africa

With support from the Kellogg Foundation, the first Youth Ventures launched in South Africa. Newly established Ventures include the Lathi Tha Youth Group, based in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. A team of seven young people, led by Venturer Bantu, aim to eradicate illiteracy and encourage reading in schools. They have set up the community's first library, which has already attracted many regulars, and they have developed homework classes, a storytelling program, dictionary skills training and reading groups to get people reading in the community. Another Venture is All for Lwazi, which aims to integrate students from township schools and suburban schools as debating teams in a new debate league they are creating in a region north of Johannesburg. The demand among South Africa's youth for the opportunity to become changemakers is enormous, and Youth Venture is working to expand to meet the demand.

Germany Embraces Youth Changemakers

This year, Zeppelin University in southern Germany partnered with Youth Venture to provide its students the opportunity to engage in the community by reaching out into local middle and high schools to help young students start Ventures. Zeppelin, which encourages entrepreneurship in its students, is spreading the message throughout the region that being a changemaker will lead to success in school, career and life. In northern Germany, Staples hosted Youth Venture's first Dream it. Do it. Workshop for local youth at its Hamburg headquarters, giving Staples associates the opportunity to engage in the community in new and meaningful ways. Additionally, in the de-industrialized part of western Germany, where unemployment is a growing problem, young people are launching Ventures and learning important leadership, entrepreneurship and teamwork skills that will enable them to change their circumstances today and for life.

First Ventures Launch in Mumbai

Youth Venture officially launched its first Youth Venture Challenge in July in Mumbai, India, that brought together 27 Venture teams to design and launch their Ventures, while also building the YV community in Mumbai. The Ventures range from creating a community space for school drop outs, to working with transgendered people, to spreading awareness on global warming among school children. To learn more, check out the YV Challenge Blog at <http://yvchallenge.blogspot.com/>.

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