

“Faith and Development” 2010 - 2011 SEVEN-Center For Interfaith Action on Global Poverty Essay Competition

Grantor: S.E.VEN Fund/Center For Interfaith Action on Global Poverty

Closes: 10/15/2010

Maximum: \$5,000.00

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The S.E.VEN Fund (SEVEN) is pleased to announce its 2010 Essay Competition in partnership with the Washington DC-based Center For Interfaith Action on Global Poverty (CIFA). We are seeking essays on faith-based and faith-inspired development efforts fighting poverty and disease around the globe. The competition will award two (2) prizes of US \$5,000. The submission deadline is October 15, 2010 at midnight Eastern Standard Time (EST). Winners will be announced on December 15, 2010.

Essay Question

Are faith-based and faith-inspired enterprise based solutions more effective than conventional methods? Could interfaith efforts bridge gaps that secular efforts cannot? Could a stewardship-based understanding of entrepreneurship and profit-making infuse business with a profound moral purpose? Does the combination of concern for others and sound business principles result in sustainable, long-term solutions? While we readily learn of secular efforts in fighting poverty and disease, we very rarely hear the profound stories that describe the experiences of people who undertake this fight from a spiritual perspective. We aim to change that, and are interested in hearing your story or the story of someone you know who exemplifies faith-based or interfaith efforts to fight poverty and/or disease.

Foreign economic aid and government programs have spent billions of dollars over the past five decades to alleviate the high number of people living in poverty. No country has been lifted out of poverty solely as a result of these efforts. One-dimensional aid programs cannot alleviate poverty because they associate poverty solely with low to no levels of income for individuals and families. However, poverty in its broader and more relevant sense may be understood as stemming from an impoverished sense of self in relation to God, community, and the environment. A more holistic, integral approach that takes account of the full human person is necessary for effective poverty alleviation. Physical, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects need to be accounted for if we want to truly create abundance.

The notion of creating wealth is often stigmatized, and businesspeople can be regarded as too self-interested to be a force for positive social change. But what if they are informed by a spiritual worldview? A faith-based approach helps one to regard material rewards from a perspective of temporary stewardship and understand the responsibility that comes with that. Sound business principles ensure that efforts result in more than a handout, instead growing into a self-sustaining solution that affirms the dignity of all. Faith compels us to act in solidarity with others for the common good of all.

What if these efforts take place in an interfaith setting? Are communities of diverse faiths mutually called to tasks of love

and service, collaborating to improve the human condition, and participating in their shared covenant with God? Does interfaith action and dialogue on a grassroots level grant opportunities to explore an empathetic mutuality and identify transformed behavior? Perhaps interfaith action redefines the boundaries of who is perceived as a neighbor and who is included in one's community?

Share with us an inspiring story about a faith-based or faith-inspired effort in development addressing one or more of the following issues:

- * Interfaith collaboration and action against poverty or disease;
- * Faith-based or faith-inspired efforts addressing seemingly intractable problems;
- * Bringing together faith-based efforts and sustainable enterprise based poverty alleviation, i.e. faith-inspired enterprises offering for-profit solutions to poverty.

We invite stories about individual action, or about collaborations between individuals or communities of different faiths on issues that affect global poverty. We are looking for stories and lessons learned about innovation, failures and projects, collaborations and businesses created, for-profit enterprises funding non-profit solutions, and the people helped by such efforts. The essay should be no longer than 2000 words, in English, and each submission should start with a 100-word abstract and a 100-word biography of the author.

SEVEN and CIFA are looking for stories in which people of faith or faith communities have decided to stimulate human and economic development through an "unorthodox mix" of faith, collaboration, for-profit entrepreneurship, business strategy, local wisdom, and mutual benefit. Potential essay writers are asked to read the four stories listed below and, informed by what they read, tell the story of faith-based or faith-inspired action/collaboration in solving issues (such as enterprise solutions to poverty) to help us inspire others and highlight where such efforts are taking root and flourishing around the world.

This competition is open to anyone who lives at the intersection of faith and entrepreneurship and seeks to find ways to alleviate poverty through faith-inspired, sustainable enterprise solutions, or has implemented this work in collaboration between individuals and communities of different faiths.

This essay competition is open to all participants globally.

Only applications submitted through the form on our website will be accepted. If you encounter problems, please contact SEVEN at info@sevenfund.org.

Important Dates

- * Inaugural SEVEN-CIFA Call for Essays: April 10, 2010
- * Deadline for Essay submission: 12:00AM Eastern Standard Time (EST), October 15, 2010
- * SEVEN-CIFA Essay Award Announcements: December 15, 2010

Via Email

General Inquiries: [info\(at\)sevenfund.org](mailto:info@sevenfund.org)

Via Snail Mail

S.E.VEN Fund

1770 Massachusetts Avenue, 247

Cambridge, MA 02140

United States of America

Link: <http://www.sevenfund.org/faith-and-development/index.php>

Categories: At-Risk Populations, Community Health, Community Outreach , Community Service Programs, Essay Award, Global Health, Nonprofits, Preventive Medicine, Public Health, Public Service, Rural Health, Underserved Populations

Audience: Community Activist, Public Health Expert, Public Health Worker, Student, Student Researcher, Volunteer