Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative

Participant Biographies

Antigua and Barbuda

Winston Laville is the co-founder and CEO of LCP Industries which is a fully mechanical and automated farming enterprise that commercially produces onions and ther produce. The company also engages in the training of vulnerable youths within agriculture with a special focus on commercial onion production. Winston was named the Best Economic Entrepreneur at the Caribbean Innovation Challenge in 2013. He was also named a Talent and Innovation Finalist and received Antigua and Barbuda's Young Entrepreneur Award. He has a BS in Accounting.

Argentina

Rosario Ahumada founded a social enterprise called JUNO, a platform where women that want to work from their house can find short-term jobs and promote their products and services. She is also the COO of a startup incubator in Argentina called Nerdcube. Rosario previously worked as a program coordinator at Argentina Emprendedora. She has a degree in Political Science from the Universidad Católica Argentina.

Matias Balaclav is committed to developing the entrepreneurship scene in Argentina, and The Venture Builder Company will be a laboratory of high impact technological startups in the fields of finance, healthcare, internet of things, and CRM platforms. In 2010 he founded BigDeal.com.ar, a daily deal website that became an ecommerce marketplace. The company offers discounts in leisure, travel, and products. He is currently running a digitalization project for the Argentine government. Matias studied Engineering at the Buenos Aires Institute of Technology (ITBA).

Jimena Flores is on the board of directors of Medical Salud, a healthcare company that offers a health system solution for middle and low-class citizens. Jimena has been a part of the company since it was founded in 2012. She studied Accounting and Business Management and specializes in enterprising skills. She has represented her country in many entrepreneur forums in countries such as Guatemala, Brazil, Germany, Spain, and other countries during the last 5 years.

Matias Lastra is the Co-Founder of MOBA, a housing solution for people in conditions of necessity, either due to economic pressures or as a result of a natural disaster. He studied architecture and has spent the last four years studying social and emergency housing. MOBA has already built several prototypes and was accelerated by StartUpChile in 2015.

Augusto Mancuso is the Co-Founder and CMO of Glupa.co, a fundraising platform where people donate to social causes and receive benefits. They encourage young people to collaborate to NGOs in a new and creative way. They involve the three main actors of society, NGOs, people, and businesses to achieve the goal of collaborative help. Augusto has a Bachelor's Degree in Social Communication from the Pontificia Universidad Catolica Argentina. He is proactive and looking forward to creating impact by creating scalable social enterprises.

Tatiana Podliszewski is currently studying law at the University Torcuato Di Tella. She is committed to improving the educational possibilities of disadvantaged people in Argentina, and this has led her to be the President of Social Consciousness UTDT. The organization encourages students to complete their university studies. Tatiana is also part of EIDOS, a foundation that develops and executes public policies designed to teach abilities through playful pedagogies.

Alejandro Sherriff is the founder and CEO of VALORes Enfoques Creativos Empresariales, a consulting firm located in South Patagonia, Argentina and formed by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals who give advice to companies in different areas of expertise. Some of these areas include human resources, leadership, branding, entrepreneurship, and communication, among others. The company always has the same goal: creating more effective organizations and the ability to multiply value. VALORes, being a first mover in its geographical area, has achieved several goals since its foundation, advising and training hundreds of businessmen in Argentine South Patagonia. Alejandro is a passionate and committed young entrepreneur who has already founded 3 companies that are still running. He is an Attorney at Law, has a Master's in Business Administration, and is a Certified Business Coach.

Ianir Sonis is the founder of ReservaTurno, the leading beauty marketplace in Argentina. He worked at Google and PwC before starting his own business. He was recognized as Student Entrepreneur of the Year in 2015 by the Argentina Chapter of Entrepreneurs' Organization. He holds a BA in Business and Information Management from the Buenos Aires Institute of Technology.

Mariela Sporn was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She received her undergraduate degree in Communications and later specialized in Marketing and Branding. After acquiring experience in multinational corporations, she has founded her own company, RealRef. Being aware of the inequity of information between employees and employers, RealRef was created as an online community that consists of reviews of companies by their current and former employees. This helps them choose their perfect place to work, and it also helps enterprises to improve in real-time. She also works for Santander Rio, leading innovative projects that involve technology and new media.

Santiago Yelmini co-founded LATIO 6, a growing Latin American community of entrepreneurs designed to help startup founders to overcome the implementation challenges they face when going from an idea to a reality. Programs aim to raise the success rate of new ventures during the pre-acceleration phase of the entrepreneurial process. He works as a Coordinator of Open Innovation Processes at the National Undersecretariat of Public Innovation and Open Government of Argentina. He holds an Industrial Engineering Degree from the Austral University.

Aruba

Indira Burke is the Co-Founder of Loui Henri Media Services VBA, a company that provides film making, photography, video, and audiovisual production services. She also serves as an Office Manager at Precise Construction N.V. where she supports the personnel, finance, budget, and business administration teams. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Governance and Management from the University of Aruba.

Anika Stevens is the founder of Enamora, an online eco-chic jewelry boutique that supports indigenous families in Ecuador. She provided training to indigenous families in the Ecuadorian Amazon to improve and support their traditional art techniques. Enamora aims to support even more families in different countries in the future. Anika is a passionate supporter of creating social change. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Economics at the University of Aruba. After graduating, she has taken several courses at CEDLA - Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation in Amsterdam to improve her knowledge about Latin America.

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Participant Biographies

Bahamas

Louby Georges is the Founder of The Flipside, a business and nonprofit organization that is geared towards bridging the gap between Haitians and Bahamians in the Bahamas. The Flipside has been in existence since 2013 and is the only program of its kind in the Bahamas. Nightly Louby provides pertinent information to an estimated 100,000 Haitians in the Bahamas via radio. The Flipside's non-profit organization arm has a membership of over 60 individuals and is committed to community service and social development. He currently serves as the VP of Public Relations for the Bahamas National Youth Council and as an executive on the Grand Bahama Human Rights Association's Board.

Tanya McFall is certified in Tax Administration with an emphasis on Value Added Tax. She is the Co-Founder of Global Conversations Development Centre (GCDC), a foreign language training institute that offers training in Mandarin Chinese, English as a Second Language, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, French, Haitian Creole, and other languages. GCDC caters to children and adult learners. Tanya serves as TV host and Program Manager of ZNS's The Youth Zone. Tanya has a Bachelor's of Business Administration with a focus on Marketing. She is a former Marketing Manager and has more than 6 years in marketing and advertising.

Ashleigh Rolle is one of the CoFounders of the company Skipper, an online platform that connects travelers to boat captains in order to make travel between the 700 Bahamian islands more accessible and more affordable. Ashleigh is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers Community as well as an active ambassador with the organization One Young World. In 2015, Ashleigh became the country chair for the Bahamas for the organization Global Dignity, an organization that was cofounded by Prince Haakon of Norway.

Barbados

Dr. La-Tonia Arthur is the Founder and Director of Gentle Beginnings Daycare, Inc., which began in September 2015. She is also a Registrar in the Accident and Emergency Department of Barbados' lone public hospital. Gentle Beginnings Daycare has a mission to create a literacy-rich environment where children can start and continue their life-long journey. They incorporate a healthy lifestyle education in their curriculum and hope to be the catalyst for health reform in Barbados. La-Tonia earned two degrees from the University of the West Indies (Mona Campus), as well as a Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Medicine (Bachelor of Surgery). She has been practicing medicine for the past six years and aspires to be a pediatric emergency medicine physician.

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Participant Biographies

Kevin Devonish is a civil engineer focused on the environment, and he is concerned about the harmful effects of fossil fuels. This has driven him to focus his career on developing solutions for the environment and delivering education. Kevin founded AES Energy Systems, Inc. with the aim to become a leader in Barbados, and throughout the Caribbean, in providing cleaner and safer energy solutions while educating our population and protecting our future. Acting as a practitioner and consultant in the industry, he has focused on managing, installing, and developing renewable energy and energy efficient projects from the ground up. This has driven Kevin further into the energy market where he is creating energy projects worthy of investment.

Ro-Ann Mohammed is a Trinidadian human rights activist focused on the advancement of the rights of gender and sexual minorities. Based in Barbados, she Co-Founded and Co-Directs Barbados - Gays, Lesbians and All-Sexuals against Discrimination (B-GLAD). Her activism recognizes the intersectional layers of marginalization which often plague gender and sexual minorities, and she cultivates inclusive and comprehensive spaces for LGBTQ empowerment and expression. She has been invested in policy reform, increased visibility, and public education for the diversification of the narrative around gender and sexual minorities. In 2015, she was named a Women Deliver Young Leader for her work with sexual and reproductive health and rights. Ro-Ann is a Grantmaking Advisor for FRIDA/The Young Feminist Fund, which provides support to grassroots initiatives that empower young women and girls. She studied Psychology at the University of the West Indies.

Alian Ollivierre is a Barbadian entrepreneur with legal, international policy, consultancy, non-profit, and corporate experience across various sectors. She is the Managing Director and Lead Consultant/Trainer at Gateway International, a training and consultancy agency for individuals, NGOs, and businesses, and has served as the Caribbean (SIDS) Focal Point for the UN Major Groups of Children & Youth. She is currently the Chairperson of the Advisory Board for the Caribbean Regional Youth Council. As Founder/Director of I Am A Girl Barbados, a not-for-profit that aids in the development of girls ages five to eighteen, she develops programs to inspire and empower positive change. With an LLB (Hons) and MSc. International Relations (Hons), Alian has gained ten years of experience in London and within the United Nations sphere, while recently becoming an author of her published thesis on regional integration. Her main passion is sustainable community development for youth.

Gregory Skeete is an engineering professional, children's book author, and globally certified John Maxwell Team Coach, Teacher, and Speaker. He is the Founder and Managing Director of Pilly Pelican Inc., a creative company focused on educating and inspiring children to reach their highest potential, while rekindling their love for literacy, learning, and life. He is also the Founder of Life Engineer Inc., through which he offers professional coaching and training in the areas of leadership, productivity, creativity, personal development, and life engineering. Gregory holds a BSc. in Mechanical Engineering, certificates in Dairy Science and Technology and Supervisory Management, and has five years of process and operations engineering experience in the beverage industry between Barbados and The Netherlands.

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Participant Biographies

Belize

Heidi Castillo is one of the Co-founders of Grandma B's, a Belizean-owned and operated small business dedicated to providing the best in delicious sweets, candy, and Belizean desserts. Grandma B's started as a simple dream in the family's kitchen and has grown to be a recognizable and preferred Belizean treat in her home district. She also works as a freelancer at Upwork. Heidi is currently working on a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from the University of Belize.

Stephen Daniel Diaz is the Executive Director of Belize Youth Empowerment for Change, a youth-led organization that strives to represent the voices and dreams of young Belizeans with a focus of LGBT youth and empowerment. Stephen participates in five active NGOs as a volunteer to support capacity building and empowerment. He supports sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality, and he participated in the Montevideo Consensus and ICPD agenda discussions.

Andrew J. Munnings is a Youth Officer at the Department of Youth Services in Belize. He helped to launch the biggest peer helpers group in Belize, Guide Light Productions, and is currently the Executive Director. In April 2015, Andrew was selected to be one of two Belizean youth to represent his country at the 4th Young Americas Forum in Panama. Andrew made history in his country by becoming the first Belizean to be nominated for an executive position on the Commonwealth Youth Council that was held in Malta in November 2015. In December 2015 Andrew received the Youth Ministers Award.

Gabriel Pop is the Founder and Executive Director of the Na'lu'um Cacao Institute in Belize. The Institute is working to grow a sustainable cacao industry which benefits farmers, their communities, and their environment. The organization provides technical support to its members by training them to prune their cacao fields, grow quality grafted seedlings, and to maintain their farm organically. They also provide necessary tools to help them produce quality cacao for the market. He previously worked as an Extension Officer at the Toledo Cacao Growers Association. He participated in the Agora Accelerator program in Nicaragua in 2012.

Hernan Urbina is the co-manager and marketing director of IceBreak in Belize. IceBreak is a family-owned ice cream parlor and deli that provides traditional and exotic local flavors, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic. IceBreak is one of the only family-oriented businesses catering to all ages as well as both locals and tourists. He hopes that his venture will provide a safe local spot for members of the community to congregate. He wants to franchise his business in the future. Hernan has a dual Bachelor's Degree in International Business.

Bolivia

Gabriel I. Alborta is the Founder and CEO of Yanapaña a free medical platform that allows users to make free and anonymous questions and receive reliable advice from a previously validated doctor for any health concerns. Gabriel has transformed his interest in improving the health system and his passion for helping others into an innovative startup that is dedicated to providing free and effective medical visits for anyone. Gabriel is studying Business Administration at the Universidad Privada Boliviana.

Silvia Alipaz Portugal is from La Paz, Bolivia and studied communication at Umsa University. She is the owner and manager of English Club, the first center in Bolivia that is specialized in teaching English to kids from 2 to 12 years old. They include workshops covering cooking, dancing, and singing in order to make learning English more enjoyable. In 2015 English Club opened its second branch. English Club now has three branches. Silvia has worked as a teacher since 2007 and taught primary school children at Castillito de Colores School in La Paz. She has a certificate in Education from UNITEPC.

Martina Brañez is the Co-Founder and CEO of IMPORTIA SRL. IMPORTIA SRL is a family business that represents industrial raw material suppliers and manufacturers for the Bolivian market. She co-founded the company in 2013 and has been participating in local entrepreneurial programs, such as the Business Women Leaders Program sponsored by YENTE in 2014 and the Leadership, Entrepreneur, and Innovation Program 2015 (PLEI 2015), sponsored by Bolivia Emprende. Martina has a Master's Degree from the Instituto Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer.

Angela Caquegua is the creator of the Promotion Platform of Quinoa, the "Golden Grain" of Bolivia, inspired by the rural family producers of quinoa in Bolivia who need markets and better prices for their product. They also want to improve the quality of life for quinoa producers. She is a passionate entrepreneur who wants to help Bolivian companies market their products abroad through the use of technology and online marketing. She has developed web platforms for agricultural institutions, government entities, and small and medium companies in Bolivia. She has a degree in Systems Engineering from the University Gabriel René Moreno of Santa Cruz, Bolivia. In 2015 she was selected to participate in the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) in the U.S.

Wara Fabiani is in charge of Marketing and Sales planning at Bolivian Craft S.R.L. This company is a family entrepreneurship venture that helps Bolivian artisans sell their products directly to the clients. For this purpose, Bolivian Craft has a website that offers a variety of Bolivian products to the United States and Europe. Wara studied International Business at The Universidad Católica Boliviana, San Pablo in La Paz, Bolivia. Wara's engagement with social and economic development inspired her to write a thesis about corporate social responsibility to overcome poverty among women in La Paz.

Daniella Garcia is the Founder and CEO of Elemental, the first tech training center in Bolivia that is focused on preparing and motivating kids, teens, and young people to become tech creators instead of just consumers. Daniella is an active member of the Google Developer community in Bolivia, where she started Women Techmakers La Paz, a program that provides visibility, community, and resources for women in technology. Daniella studied Computer Science at San Simon University. She has focused on developing her skills in Front End Development and UX Design. With 8 years of experience in software development during which she co-founded several tech startups, Daniella was able to combine tech training and education. She enjoys being a frequent speaker in tech and entrepreneurship events.

Antonio Mendoza has extensive experience in information security, and he traveled to China on a scholarship to learn about satellite design as part of the Bolivian satellite project. He also worked for the Bolivian Space Agency. Antonio then co-founded EnerGea, a social enterprise aimed at increasing energy efficiency and developing related products. In 2014, EnerGea was named one of the winners of the Greenovators award sponsored by the IADB. They were recognized for their project aimed at developing LED lighting products locally. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Telecommunications Engineering, an MBA, and a Master's Degree in Solar Energy. Antonio teaches at Univalle University.

Wendy Meruvia is Co-founder and Director of Ciudad Mundo (World City) Foundation, a social entrepreneurship that aims to promote the comprehensive development of young people through programs and projects that combine international travel with personal and professional growth. The intent is that Bolivians will have better academic and job opportunities and become leaders with a spirit

of service. Wendy has a Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design, is certified in Higher Education, and is currently a Master's candidate studying Social Project Management and Business Administration.

Wilson Saavedra is the founder and CEO of Bolivian Naturals which specializes in the industrialization and distribution of organic and natural products. Bolivian Naturals is founded upon an inclusive business model to increase and stabilize the incomes of small-scale Bolivian food producers, with the aim of increasing the production and availability of Bolivian natural and organic products with high nutritional potential for the national and international market. In 2015, Wilson was selected to take part in the Atlas Corps Fellowship program and worked for one year with the international NGO Heartland Alliance International which is based in Chicago. Prior to this, Wilson developed business plans and international markets for Bolivian companies and farmer associations in the organic food sector. Wilson earned his Bachelor's Degree in Finance with honors from the Bolivian Private University.

Israel Torrez is a Bolivian flutist and music conductor. He is the founder of La Paz Philharmonic, which is considered one of the best orchestras in Bolivia and has support from the Bolivian Ministry of Culture, the mayor of La Paz, and Cubana – Boliviana Ballet School. He studied at the National University of the Arts in Argentina and took private lessons from international flute soloist Claudio Barile. He worked for the Buenos Aires Philharmonic, Bolivian National Symphony, and the Andean Development Corporation (C.A.F.). He has won many national and international music contests, allowing him to attend master classes, perform in concerts, and go on tour.

Brazil

Ystallonne Alves is the Co-Founder of Agromarra and CTO of EnergyNow and Amazing Tech. Agromarra is a technology startup that develops solutions for the agribusiness field. The startup produces devices and software products that aim to help farmers better understand their production. Giving real-time information about their farm animals regarding milk production, weight, vaccines, genealogy, and other daily life aspects of the animals in the farms, they provide an optimization for managing animal production. He is a Master degree student in the research field of Graphics Processing and Computational Intelligence at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. He also completed a one year Fulbright community college program at NVCC. He was recognized as an Alumnus to Advocate by the U.S. Consulate General in Brazil.

Juliana Batista is the Co-Founder and General Manager at Elefa Education for Life, an initiative committed to providing an educational service for young people, seeking to supplement traditional school education with financial education related to credit card use, retirement, establishing financial goals, etc. Education for Life is a division of Elefa Advisory and Consulting, which helps microenterprises become sustainable through consulting, advisory, and

business training. She has a Master's Degree in Humanities from the Universidade Anhanguera UNIDERP and a Bachelor's Degree from the Universidade Paulista UNIP.

Rodrigo Biajoni is the Co-founder of Colaboradora, an initiative from Agência trustme, which offers communication support through ebooks, training, and branding development to NGOs and social enterprises. Colaboradora is a private fund that collects 5% of trustme's revenue to finance the pro-bono work for organizations that cannot afford communication materials. Rodrigo also supports NESsT as a Latin America Porfolio Manager to identify, develop, and invest in social enterprises focused on generating employment and income. For the past nine years he has worked in communications and sales for private companies, NGOs, and government agencies in Brazil and Mexico. He has a degree in Social Communications from Faculdades Integradas Hélio Alonso, and is finishing an MBA in Strategic Business Management at the Universidade Federal Fluminense.

Camilla Borges Costa is the Founder, President, and General Manager of Politiquê?, a nonprofit aimed at providing political education and fostering civic entrepreneurship among young people between 15 and 25 years old. Since 2013, Camilla has led more than 100 volunteers through Politiquê? and has impacted over 3,000 people. In addition to her role as the leading manager at Politiquê?, she also works in a program called Local Agents of Innovation at SEBRAE, promoting innovation and management practices at small businesses. Camilla was named one of the 18 young people making a difference by Época magazine in 2016. She has a Bachelor´s Degree in International Relations and in Business Administration.

André Dumont is a Project Optimization Professional for IBM and is a social entrepreneur for Projeto Soprar where he performs roles such as HR Director and Project Manager. Projeto Soprar aims to change a neighborhood in Campinas, a municipality in Sao Paulo State in Brazil, through basic education quality improvement. Before IBM, André worked as an intern in several industries like oil and gas, agroindustry, and biochemistry research. André has a technician degree in Biochemistry, a Bachelor's Degree in Economics, and is currently pursuing a MBA in Project Management at Fundação Getúlio Vargas.

Danielle Fausto is the founder of Danielle Fausto Coaching Company. The company is dedicated to supporting people so they can find their personal and professional purpose. She has been training and coaching individuals since 2013, and she wrote an E-book entitled *Find Your Life Purpose*. She also created a Canvas Purpose Methodology. In 2015, she received a Golden Award from HSBC Bank Brasil for People Management. She is also the founder of a Women Entrepreneurs Local Group, and a volunteer coach at an NGO called Sociedade Global. Danielle has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and a post-graduate degree in the same field from the Universidade Federal do Paraná.

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Participant Biographies

Adriane Fernandes is a psychology student with a focus on gender violence and social behavior. She is a marketing analyst at Pmweb and Co-creator/founder at Não Me Calo, which is a web application that ranks the places where women felt unsafe. Users rank safety and report incidents of gender violence. She has a Master's Degree in Psychology from the Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos.

Gui Franco is the founder of [un]tourism, a platform to connect travelers from around the world with local communities for authentic and immersive experiences. He has previously provided consulting services to NGOs, the government, and impact businesses. He has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Fundação Getulio Vargas and a degree in Public Relations from the University of São Paulo.

Michelle Guimarães is the founder of Fora da Caixa, a consulting company focused on customer service management and small business development. Its new project Visit Manaus is a tourism platform that helps visitors and promotes local tourism businesses. She is one of the founders of Amazonas State Young Entrepreneurs Association, which serves individuals between the ages of 18 and 40 who are running their own businesses. She is also a member of the Council of the National Confederation of Young Entrepreneurs, which has 36,000 members in the country. Michelle has a Bachelor's Degree in Tourism Management, a post-graduate degree in Business Management from the Universidade Gama Filho and ten years of experience in marketing and sales.

Monique Lemos is the Co-Founder of UP (Universe of Possibilities), a knowledge sharing community that allows people from different areas to share their professional experiences in order to support young people in their career choices. Monique is also a partner of SER, an enterprise that aims to promote positive impact solutions. She is also one of the individuals responsible for NOSSA, an innovation hub that brings together social entrepreneurs to develop their projects. Monique has been an active member of Salvador's entrepreneurship community. In 2014 she co-founded the new University Entrepreneurship League; in 2015 she was selected by the World Economic Forum as a member of their young Global Shapers Program. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA).

Leonardo de Siqueira Lima is a former Air Force Cadet in the Brazilian Air Force. He is the founder of Mais Educação, a nonprofit organization that aims to provide financial support for young people with fewer financial resources so that they can access quality education. Their goal is to help every student raise tuition money via crowdfunding. He holds a Bachelor´s Degree in Economics from Fundação Getulio Vargas in Brazil and a Master of Science degree in Economics, awarded by Pompeu Fabra University in Spain. He is also the founder of Terraço Econômico, a website that provides a forum for debate by posting articles on economic theory.

Thiago Lopes is the founder and CEO of American Insight, a company aimed at changing people's lives by providing quality English classes. The company is located in Macaé, Rio de Janeiro with almost 200 students and more than 15 companies associated with it. The company is looking to expand to three different cities next year. Thiago hopes to create a digital project focused on teaching students anywhere in the world. The company was the finalist of a Sebrae and FNQ competition among more than 4,000 companies in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Thiago is also the co-founder of T&D Insight Consultoria, a consulting company aimed at building healthy companies and people. He is a Guidepoint International Consultant and Production Engineering undergraduate student at the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ).

Leandro Luque is the Founder and CEO of at4you, a non-profit Brazilian organization focused on developing and customizing assistive technologies for impaired people. In addition to his role as CEO at at4you, Leandro serves as an associate professor in Computer Science at Sao Paulo State Technological College. Leandro earned a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science and a Master's Degree in Applied Computing after attending the National Institute for Space Research. He is currently completing a PhD program in Computer Engineering at the University of Sao Paulo with funding from Toshiba Corporation. In 2016, he received the Google Latin America Research Award.

Felipe Neves is a lawyer at a prominent law firm in São Paulo, Brazil and the founder and president of Projeto Constituição na Escola (Constitutional Law in Schools Project). This project aims to teach students of public schools located in poor areas in São Paulo, Brazil the main aspects of the constitution and current anti-corruption regulations. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Law from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica of São Paulo (PUC-SP), where he is currently an assistant professor.

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Stephanie Oliveira is Founder and CEO of Host a Future, an online platform where students can use their knowledge and skills as currency in exchange for accommodations with hosts living near the universities to improve their quality of life and learning. This company is part of Shell Iniciativa Jovem, the Brazilian version of Shell LiveWIRE. Stephanie is also a social projects consultant for NGOs at Instituto Ekloos and a mentor of social entrepreneurship at GESS MOOC. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Communications from Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), an International Certification in Social Business from ESPM Social Yunus Business Centre, and an MBE in Economics and Sustainability Management from UFRJ.

Natalia Pegoraro is the cofounder of O Amor é Simples, a Brazilian brand that sells cheap and beautiful wedding dresses online. The company is striving to change the traditional $5 billion per year wedding industry known for its high prices; she wants to empower lower class brides to still be able to have their dream wedding within their budget. Previously, Natalia worked as a content manager in a local publicity agency and has more than eight years of experience in digital marketing and brand content. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations from the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) and a Master's Degree in Marketing from Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV).

Julio Cesar Regis is the Co-Founder and COO of Hosoume Incorporadora, a venture created in 2016 to provide affordable housing projects for low-income families in Brazil. The vision of this company is to combat housing shortages through innovative construction systems. Julio has a Bachelor's Degree in Communication, and he worked for seven years as a digital marketing specialist in both local and global firms. In 2011 he began an entrepreneurial career developing his own company, Realize CCA, a financial services consulting company that creates solutions for the real estate market.

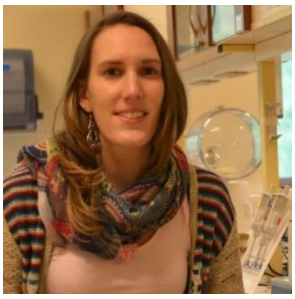
Murillo Sabino is the co-founder of Projeto RUAS, a social tool to engage communities to resolve problems related to homelessness. More than 350 volunteers have participated already. Murillo also is an active member of the Development Forum for Social Business of Rio de Janeiro. He has worked for four years at Coca-Cola Brasil as a trainee, developing projects in areas such as Finance, Shopper Marketing, and Operations. Also, he has co-founded JUCS (Advertising Colleges State Games), a sports event that gathers the biggest advertising universities of Rio de Janeiro in a 4 day competition. He has a degree in Production Engeneering from PUC-Rio University.

Liziane Dranka Silva is the Founder and CEO of Ink, a social business supporting the expansion capabilities of social organizations and businesses through consulting and training services. She previously served as a Youth Ventures Program Coordinator for Aliança Empreendedora in Curitiba, Brazil. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from the Universidade Federal do Paraná.

Iluska Vieira has spent 9 years developing skills of young people and 7 years leading organizations connected with the social business environment in Latin America. In October 2015 Iluska started Pranah, an impact business focused on education in Brazil. Every student has his or her own abilities and skills, but the current education system does not allow teachers to understand the differences and apply diverse methodologies to focus on individual performance. Pranah is a pioneer in identifying the way each one learns best. The business provides self-awareness, learning tools, and methodologies for Brazilian teachers, parents, and students. Since 2015, Pranah has developed methods and social emotional skills for children and teenagers. The business has won the SEBRAE Social Business Award, developed a partnership with private schools, and was selected by the Brazil Foundation to implement its methods in public schools in low income areas of Rio de Janeiro.

Chile

Maria Jose Diaz is the Managing Director of Investors at Cumplo, a crowdfunding lending platform that allows borrowers, primarily small and medium enterprises, and investors to connect directly. Cumplo's mission is to have fair rates through a transparent and collaborative online marketplace, thereby reducing information asymmetries. Prior to Cumplo, Maria worked for the Government of Chile as the Minister's Chief of Staff at the National Women's Service (SERNAM), as an advisor at the Ministry of Social Development, and in the planning unit at the National Emergency Office (ONEMI). She has a degree in Business Administration from the Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile.



Andrea Donoso created the company DiagnoChrome, a spin-off from the University of Concepción, which is dedicated to the production of diagnostic kits for agricultural plant pathogens. Andrea studied Plant Biotechnology Engineering and has a Master's Degree in Forestry Sciences. She started working in the biotechnology center of the University of Concepción on projects related to the genomics of plant resistance to biotic and abiotic stress.

Cristobal Duran, along with his brothers Julio and Javier, co-founded El Camino Dairy Farm, a countryside company that produces all-natural dairy products. Cristobal strives to craft the finest preservative, thickener, and colorant-free dairy products in Chile. Headquartered in Villarrica-Loncoche, Cristobal oversees the entire operation from the production process to shipping the batches to Santiago and delivering to clients. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Business from the Universidad de Los Andes, and is a member of the Chilean Entrepreneurial Association (ASECH).

Andrei Fuentes is the Cofounder of Parso, a company that builds smart parking technology for smart cities. Their technology allows drivers to easily find and pay for parking, while allowing governments and private operators to manage parking areas and obtain real-time information in an efficient way. The company has operations in Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay. Andrei is a Software Engineer, and has a Master's Degree in Computer Science. Before working at Parso, he taught Computer Science at a technical university in Costa Rica.

Cintya Gajardo is the founder of DUKA, a company dedicated to innovative and technological improvements in aquaculture. Cintya has worked on innovation projects in areas as diverse as industrial conditioning, culture, industrial waste treatment, and food, among others. She studied at the University of Bio Bio in Chile and the Polytechnic University of Valencia in Spain, and she is an industrial designer. Throughout her life she has dedicated herself to seeking and developing innovative solutions for different problems and needs. She loves teamwork and is an amateur photographer.

Sebastián Herceg is the Co-Founder of Kyklos, a civil organization that works with students, teachers, parents, and administrators to develop a consciousness surrounding recycling. Kyklos won an award related to its environmental efforts from Start-Up Chile and won seed capital from CORFO Chile. Kyklos wants to create an environmental revolution. He previously supported the commercial area at ALUSA S.A., helping to provide flexible packaging solutions for major companies. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from the Universidad Adolfo Ibañez.

Jorge Martinez Lubiano is the Executive Director and Co-founder of Yo Uso Bien Mi Dinero, a foundation teaching young people how to become entrepreneurial, responsible, and smart financial decision makers. Jorge is a Professor of Financial Culture at University Adolfo Ibañez and Coach of the Queens Young Leaders Award leadership program, helping inspiring individuals multiply their impact. Jorge has an M.Sc. in Finance and a Diploma in Coaching from The University of Cambridge.

Catalina Moreno is a Chilean lawyer from the University of Chile with a Master's from the University of Pisa, Italy. She is the Founder and President of the nonprofit organization Garras y Patas, which is dedicated to the rescue, recovery, and relocation of stray dogs and cats. She also educates the community and promotes responsible pet ownership. Catalina also works as an attorney in Provida, a Metlife company, dividing her time between both jobs. Garras y Patas has become one of the largest pet nonprofit organizations in the country, with great presence in social networks. The company is always innovating in order to finance themselves, grow, and solve the reality of the abandoned pet overpopulation on the Chilean streets.

Andrés Sánchez is cofounder of VarEdu, a private organization that works with incubators, accelerators, companies, startups, and entrepreneurs to design, coordinate, and execute different programs framed in Design Thinking and Lean Startup methods. It is in the pilot stage in Santiago, looking forward to improving its networks to accelerate the impact. Since 2013 he has been developing various startups as a cofounder. Andrés graduated from UDP Law School in 2006 and has previously worked at engineering and mining companies in their corporate affairs departments.

Jorge Waidele co-founded Aymae, a recycling company that reuses wood from the wine industry and demolition companies in Chile. All of this wood is then marketed and distributed in the major malls and shops in Chile. Jorge studied law, specializing in Private International Law. He participated in an exchange program in New Zealand where he studied International Law and Arts at the University of Otago, Dunedin. Today, he works actively as the CEO of Aymae, seeking to expand trade and partnership agreements with suppliers to increase the tons of material to be reused. He is also seeking business alliances for the distribution of products made from reused materials.

Colombia

Jairo Alejandro Angel is the co-founder of Civilization, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving water infrastructure and sanitation in communities with poor access to these services. They train local people to construct, operate, and manage water services in their places. Jairo founded Civilization with three colleagues trying to give solutions to the water crisis in the Colombia by considering alternative water source systems, safe water storage, renewable energy sources for treatment and pumping, and sanitation options. Jairo is a professor at the Universidad Javeriana Cali, having special interest in water treatment and distribution. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering and a Master's Degree in Environmental Engineering from the Politecnico di Torino, Italy.

Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative

Participant Biographies

Mazal Blanco is a Manager at Mazal Blanco Eco Design S.A.S., which designs, produces, and promotes jewelry made out of organic materials. She was previously an art teacher for the Casas de Cultura in Colombia where she emphasized traditional music, performing arts, and traditional craft making. In 2011, she became part of the artistic collective Cuatroojos. She has a Master's Degree in Design from the Universidad Autonoma del Caribe.

Andres Cabrera Silva is an entrepreneur and developer with more than seven years of experience. Andres has a special interest in the application of data science in the development of healthcare. He is the founder of My Medical Assistant, an entrepreneurship project that provides a portable tool through mobile devices to facilitate personalized top quality healthcare based on artificial intelligence techniques, big data analytics, and predictive risk assessment insights for disease prevention.

Vladimir Ducon is an electric engineer and the founder of Dinamov Soluciones Renovables, a Colombian company that designs and implements photovoltaic solar systems. The company also develops hardware and software platforms that provide information and data about how homes and businesses consume electric energy. This platform helps to identify energy waste and inform consumers. Dinamov has won local competitions such as Fondo Emprender SENA and BIOEXPO Colombia.

Marcela Falquez is the Executive Director at ID Social, a social enterprise that structures, manages, and operates projects that seek to generate impact and be sustainable. They offer project management and implementation services. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Engineering from the Universidad de los Andes. She has a Master's Degree in Corporate Finance from the Colegio de Estudios Superiores de Administracion (CESA).

Sully Gomez is a Colombian fashion designer and advisor at Nature Colombia, which aims to empower women in rural areas that have been affected by social conflicts. The company teaches sustainable jewelry design and focuses on business training. She studied broadcasting and worked for a year at a radio station. She previously worked at ProAves, where she worked with women who had been displaced by war. She has served as a volunteer for Ten Thousand Villages, a nonprofit organization in the U.S. that promotes fair trade.

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Participant Biographies

Cristina Gonzalez is the Founder and Director of ConEmpathy, a Colombian-based company incorporated in 2012 that offers event interpretation, document translation, and management and multimedia-related services. She is a certified translatior and interpreter, editor, singer, and voiceover and dubbing artist who believes empathy and connection are the keys to success. ConEmpathy aims to become a B-corp.

Sonia Hernandez is a microbiologist and chemical engineer from the Universidad de los Andes, Colombia. Bio Chic is a Colombian company that produces handcrafted body care products from natural ingredients sourced locally and with no added preservatives. She believes that scientific research, fair trade, and education make a powerful business model which empowers and benefits all of the communities involved. She has a Master's Degree in Cell Aging and Longevity from the Université Paris VI, France, and worked as a neuroscientist at the National Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM) in France.

Ricardo Jiménez is the Cofounder of Fútbol Fit Club, a startup that encourages people to have an active lifestyle using soccer as a reason to exercise and have fun. Fútbol Fit Club is also entering in the social entrepreneurship field and is developing a coaching program to help children from underprivileged communities. Before Fútbol Fit Club, Ricardo cofounded Mapache Studios, a video game studio that made a donation of 2 million licenses of educational software to the foundation Computadores para Educar. Ricardo is also a One Young World ambassador, Wayra alumnus, and an active member of the digital entrepreneurship ecosystem in Colombia working as a startup mentor.

Andres Lopez is an ecopreneur from Colombia and is co-owner of CI Vidfruit Ltda., an organic certified fruit processing company located in Bogota. The company is building a model of integration from which small organic producers in different regions of Colombia can benefit. For Andres, eating organic is not just a potential market, but a way of living. Andres has a Master's in Management, and he specializes in strategic marketing and sales. He is committed to creating shared value with people from isolated rural farms in Colombia. He is a strong believer in the benefits of integration and cooperation.

Lilibeydy Manrique is the cofounder of Fundación ABLE, a non-profit organization that brings bilingual and artistic educational programs to a community of more than 60,000 people in Siloé, Cali, Colombia. Lilibeydy holds a Bachelor's Degree in English and French teaching from the Universidad del Valle. She spent two years in Spokane, Washington working as a Spanish Teaching Assistant and came back to her country in 2010 to gain experience as an English teacher. She has been teaching for six years in primary and secondary schools in Cali. In January 2015 she became the director at K-5 school La Fontaine, one of the main two projects that Fundación ABLE runs in Siloé.

Santiago Martinez is the CEO of Cómo Lo Cambiarías, an organization that promotes change-making culture in students through educative programs on social entrepreneurship, innovation, and global citizenship in order to face the global challenges of today's world. He has been named the Outstanding Young Entrepreneur of Medellin. Santiago was awarded the Leadership and Civic Engagement medal by the University of Pittsburgh's Hesselbein Global Academy. He was also chosen as a Youthful Cities Global Research Fellow. He has served as a Delegate for United Nations summits and as a speaker for TEDx Talks.

David Medina Andrade is the Founder and CEO of Qubo Foundation, an organization committed to supporting LGBT people who have been victims of violence and armed conflict. Qubo is supported by the LGBT Colombia Chamber. Qubo signed its first agreement with AIESEC to work with volunteers from all over the world in a program called Inclusexual. David will soon graduate with a degree in Psychology from Konrad Lorenz. He plans to complete a postgraduate degree in Sports Psychology at El Bosque University in 2017.

Pedro Mejia is the co-founder of Alcagüete, a B-Corp company that produces healthy and delicious snacks to encourage sharing and promote a healthy lifestyle. Alcagüete was recognized as the best social entrepreneurship and awarded the dream team title by Destapa Futuro (2015). Pedro has a Business Administration degree from La Universidad de los Andes in Colombia and is currently a candidate for a Master's Degree in Marketing Strategy from CESA College (Colombia).

Vicente Mejia co-founded Clearpath Coffee, an export company that helps quality-driven coffee roasters connect to specialty coffee growers in Colombia. With a network of over 1000 growers, the company works to improve specialty coffee availability by providing farmers with training on quality and best practices. Clearpath also leads an ambitious water management project. Vicente has six years of experience in the international trade of food products. Within Clearpath, he works as a market advisor and business developer. Mr. Mejia has a Bachelor´s Degree in Veterinary Medicine and a Master's Degree in Agribusiness from the University of Buenos Aires.

Paula Porras is co-founder of Educacionenpaz.org, a virtual platform for promoting peace education and reconciliation in Colombia and Latin America. The platform has impacted more than 1,200 people in the country. She is also an innovation consultant at The National Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation in Colombia. Since 2013, Paula has been the Marketing and Special Projects Coordinator at the non-profit Somos CaPAZes, which aims to educate, motivate, and challenge children and youth to examine and resolve conflicts and complex issues in their personal lives and their communities. She is also the Co-founder and CEO of Mercado con Sentido, a digital marketplace

where the products offered contribute to the development of a community and/or nonprofit organizations. She has a degree in Industrial Engineering and in Business Administration from the Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.

Daniel Alejandro Sánchez Martin is the Co-Founder and CFO of Fundación Hagamos País, an NGO offering solutions for environmental issues, specifically recycling. Daniel is also the Co-Founder and CFO of Colombia Prospera y Participativa Citizen Oversight, a political organization founded to control public money spending and help rural communities. He has a Bachelor´s Degree in Finance and International Relations from the Universidad Externado de Colombia and a Bachelor´s Degree in Business Administration from the Universidad EAN and Université du Québec à Chicoutimi.

Marion Vall de Ruten is the founder and CEO of Chic Tours, a luxury tourism company specialized in designing unique tourism experiences in Colombia. Marion studied Industrial Design at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana and is finishing her studies in Business Administration from Sergio Arboleda University.

Margarita Varón is the founder and CEO of Colombia Rural, which offers professional consulting services related to land tenure. She is a member of the Colombian government team that designed the Land Restitution Public Policy and is the Executive Director of Land Tenure at the Ministry of Agriculture in Colombia. Margarita designed inputs for a comprehensive public policy on land tenure for the rural mission led by the National Department of Planning, and she was the advisor to the Peace Office of the Presidency of the Republic to prepare the legal and institutional requirements to implement the peace agreement clauses concerning land tenure. She was also the advisor to the National Department of Statistics. She is currently a lawyer and earned an LLM at Los Andes University in Bogotá, Colombia.

Karola Viteri is the founder and CEO of La Viña del Sur, a company that promotes Latin American healthy and delicious food brands. After starting her career in the hotel industry, she turned her passion for food and culture into her own business. Today her company represents and commercializes ten food brands from Colombia and Ecuador and distributes them all over the Colombian territory. She has a Hospitality Management degree from the USFQ – Ecuador and an MBA from Los Andes University – Colombia.

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Participant Biographies

Costa Rica

Deborah Chavarria is the Co-founder of the social business 2da Mano, a Costa Rican-based initiative which aims to impact, strengthen and improve the quality of life of women located in rural and vulnerable communities by offering them the opportunity to be entrepreneurs and sell second-hand clothing. In 2012, Deborah graduated from the "Instituto Universitario de Investigación Ortega y Gasset" obtaining a Master's Degree in International Cooperation and Project Management in Madrid, Spain. Since 2009, Deborah gained extensive work experience in international organizations as a project manager and development instructor. Currently, she is working at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a program technical assistant.

Alberto Collado is the founder and CEO at Studio Cromat, a company dedicated to help designers and clients understand each other better with the architectural projects they develop together. Since he graduated from the School of Architecture at the University of Costa Rica (UCR), he has applied his research on augmented and virtual reality technology to the design and commercialization of many business and large residential projects. His specialty is strategy and innovative design solutions for communication, industrial process, robotics and CNC machines, urban planning, and architectural construction. Alberto is a professor at the Latin American University of Science and Technology (ULACIT).

Ignacio Cubero is a Costa Rican entrepreneur with experience in the service industry and in developing, launching, and operating small scale business ventures. In 2012, he earned a Bachelor of Business Administration from the Costa Rican Institute of Technology, and in 2015, he obtained a degree in Finance from the same university. His formal work experience began as a Spanish-English translator in 2008, and in that same year he was appointed as a Certified Translator by the Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, he owns three businesses: Tiger House Translations, a translation agency that specializes in legal and business translation; Stolas, a foreign exchange student house and provider of rural and adventure tourism services; and Zero Army, a project that seeks to promote responsible and environmentally friendly consumer practices through the sale of juices in reusable glass bottles.

Karla Delgado Fallas is the Founder of Koala Designs. The company focuses on tailoring clothing and has created its own line of medical uniforms and swimwear. She previously worked as a business manager at J&K Fisio Importaciones SA and as a Credit Assistant at Western Union. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Teaching from the Universidad Internactional de las Americas.

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Participant Biographies

Omara Fuks Venegas founded TRAPP, a business intelligence platform created to digitize the waivers and evaluation forms for tour operators and other tourism companies. The purpose of the platform is to convert the data collected from customers into relevant information, allowing for better decisions to be made. TRAPP is transforming the tourism industry and taking these companies to a next level in customer service development.

Andrés Gamba is the Co-Founder and COO of Elegí Tu Deporte, he is also the sports manager of the Costa Rican Surf Federation. Elegí Tu Deporte is a company that fights against the effects of a sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity, providing information about public and private facilities and sports initiatives in Costa Rica. Andres has been an active member of the Costa Rican Network of Physical Activity and Health (RECAFIS) since 2014. He has a degree in Digital Animation, Sports Management and has been working with the government on the project entitled "State of Sports and Recreation in Costa Rica".

Eduardo Leitón is the Founder and General Director of OneSea Foundation, a non-profit organization which strives to engage the private and public sector in environmental social responsibility by promoting the adoption of best practices and strengthening the capacities of public institutions and local governments. Prior to founding OneSea he worked as a non-profit project manager improving the capacity of public institutions. Mr. Leitón is a lawyer and is seeking a Master's Degree in Taxation Law from the Universidad Latinoamericana de Ciencia y Tecnología.

Jorge Mena is a young entrepreneur who graduated from the University of Costa Rica with a degree in Business Administration. He is the co-founder and general manager of Riish and Toosh® Afro Costa Rican Paintings. Its mission is to preserve and rescue the Afro Costa Rican Culture by creating colorful paintings and Caribbean designs, while incorporating spirituality and positive messages. In 2013, their 3D Painting Technique won the WIPO Award for Creativity and Innovation from the World Intellectual Property Organization. Since 2011, he has been a member of the Sports and Recreation Committee from Montes de Oca, where he is the General Secretary. They manage and create opportunities for people to play sports and participate in recreational activities.

Alonso Quesada is the Founder of INNOVANDO Company which is focused on delivering systematic innovation tools for Latin American companies in their early stages of development. The systematic innovation program includes tools structured analytically to improve designs, products, and processes, making the startups grow with an innovation platform that will position them to be stronger in the market. Alonso has more than eight years of experience in manufacturing industries and more than three years in research and development roles in international electronics and medical companies. He holds a Mechanical Engineering degree and a Master’s Degree in Project Management.

Erick Ramirez is the founder and CEO of Corcovado Cerveceria Artesanal, a Costa Rican craft brewery whose main focus is to create paradigm-breaking beers. Erick has ten years of experience in manufacturing and service industries as an industrial engineer. Prior to starting Corcovado, he was in charge of process improvement and operations management for multinational companies in Costa Rica and Latin America. Erick has a degree in Industrial Production Engineering from the Instituto Tecnologico de Costa Rica (TEC) and is APICS Certified in Production and Inventory Management.

Cuba

Freddy Espinosa is the owner of Almaty Technologies and IT Solutions based in Havana, Cuba. They provide technological solutions to private sector clients and small business owners and contribute to the technological development of society. Freddy previously worked at All in One Travel Agency. He studied at the IT Technological Institute Osvaldo Herrera González in Havana where he focused on electronics.

Ramón González de la Calle graduated in 2008 as a Computer Sciences Engineer and worked for a couple of years in the software development industry for IT companies in Cuba. For the last 6 years he has been developing web applications as a freelancer for clients in Spain and Latin America. He is the founder of ESDCuba which aims to offer monthly community meet-ups for entrepreneurs and software developers in Havana, Cuba. Their goal is to create an evolving community of entrepreneurs and technologists that solve societal problems using digital tools and innovative solutions.

Laura González studied clinical psychology at the University of Medical Science in Havana. In 2014 she decided to create her own business, Casa Laura, with the help of her mom. She prepared rooms to rent to tourists in Vedado in Havana, Cuba. They offer services such as tourist guides, taxis, breakfast, and laundry services. Their mission is that the guest has a positive experience in Cuba. Now, she has a successful business and considers herself a young leader and entrepreneur.

Saily Gonzalez Velazquez studied literature and linguistics at the Central University of Las Villas. Saily is also General Manager of Amarillo B&B, a modern business located in the center of Santa Clara which offers lodging services for tourists who visit the town. She co-founded the business more than one year ago with her partner, and now they own three rooms and want to increase capacity and services. Saily is also familiar with the lodging web platforms and social media. In July 2016, Amarillo B&B reached the super-host status category on Airbnb.

Olemis Lang graduated from ISPJAE in 2005 with a BSc degree in Informatics and Systems Engineering. For over ten years he worked for companies in 13 countries on projects related to antivirus software, professional simulators, embedded systems, web and mobile apps, automation of power distribution substations, and 3D printing. He has collaborated with the Apache Bloodhound project since 2011 and is an active member of the Python Cuba Workgroup of the Python Software Foundation. He founded the Cuban Tech Group, a non-profit providing a foundation for open, collaborative technology development as well as education, outreach, and legal services for Cuban entrepreneurs. Olemis is the co-organizer of Encuentros Sociales de Desarrolladores, the main gathering of developers and entrepreneurs in Havana, Cuba, and is the Chair of forthcoming SciPyLA 2017 conference.

Vanessa Pino Arocha is a designer and founder and CEO of Dulces Detalles, a Cuban business that makes and sells sweets that can be gifted to others. She previously worked at the Universidad de las Ciencias Informaticas on visual communications. Vanessa has a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Design from the Instituto Superior de Diseno.

Jose Lazaro is the Founder and CEO of Daysi Ferrer in Memoriam, a Guidance Center for Adolescents and Women. The Center provides educational counseling for women. The Center also supports the societal re-acceptance of female ex-convicts. Jose is also a Specialist in International Relations, and he teaches Portuguese to adults. He is a graduate of Socio-Cultural Studies at the University of Havana, and has served as the Regional Chair of UNESCO. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociocultural Studies from the University of Havana.

Eduardo Sánchez is the Founder & CEO of METRO, a Cuban-based start-up whose main product is a suite of apps seeking to provide an array of transport-related services for Cuba by adapting to the country's social and technological situation. By addressing the most important needs of Cuban people regarding transportation, METRO aims to become the main Cuban transport IT company. Eduardo has previously worked as CTO of Impulso, an extreme sports travel agency. Additionally, he is an undergraduate studying Computer Science at Havana University, where he also works as a student assistant.

Curacao

Sulin S.F. Passial is founder and producer at Pantalla Chica Productions (PΔC), a full-service production company for the shooting and supporting of films, television programs, and commercials mainly in the Dutch Caribbean. With PΔC, Sulin is also part of several projects related to audiovisual work, most notably the Curacao International Film Festival Rotterdam and Bario Media. The latest addition to her list of projects is the film project Double Play, where she was the local coordinator. Sulin holds a B.A. in Art and Economics in Media Management from the Utrecht School of Arts.

Ulvrin Sprott graduated from the University of Amsterdam in 2011 with a Master's Degree in Tax Accounting and Tax Law. After working for the Tax Office of Curacao, he was project manager responsible for reorganizing the Tax Office of St. Martin. He founded Severus, which aims to help young entrepreneurs with their tax, legal, and accounting issues. Additionally, Severus provides workshops to entrepreneurs focused on how to start up their own company in addition to tax and financial issues. Ulvrin is also a board member of the AIDS Foundation Curacao.

Dominica

Valarie Honoré is a Social Entrepreneur and Program Officer for the East Dominica Children's Federation, a non-profit organization focused on improving the well-being of children in Dominica. Through the Federation, Valarie designs, develops, and implements programs and activities focused on areas such as children's rights, child-friendly schools, child assault prevention, education enhancement, youth empowerment, and community development. She recently developed the Youth Volunteers Network to establish a platform to facilitate the holistic development, inclusion, and empowerment of youth through volunteerism. Valarie has a background in Business Administration.

Lynworth Mitchell is the CEO and Founder of the Caribbean-based videography-media company known as Myst.Productionz (BrBpTV), which started in 2010. Lynworth turned his passion towards showcasing events and talented individuals who make a positive impact in their environment through the use of videography via MystProductionz and media via BrBpTV. BrBpTV stands for Be Real Be Positive Television and showcases real individuals doing positive things through Entertainment, Nature, Culture, and Individualism. MystProductionz utilizes the art-form of videography to produce videos in the public eye, such as music videos and live performances, as well as for private events, such as weddings. Lynworth has a Bachelor's Degree in Small Business and Entrepreneurship and won the Most Outstanding Youth in Media by the National Youth Council of Dominica for 2015-2016.

Dominican Republic

Maricha Martínez Sosa is a Dominican designer and photographer. She has experience designing for magazines, the web, and films. She is a Consultant in Communication and Design, the General Coordinator of a film production house, and a teacher. Maricha completed a Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design at APEC University in Santo Domingo, a European Official Advertising Master's Degree from Antonio de Nebrija University in Madrid, and a Post-Graduate Studies in Higher Education from UCSD in Santo Domingo. She is developing her research to opt for a Doctoral degree in Communications and Cultural Industries from the Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain. She will be further developing Cultoural, a guide that presents culture and tourism experiences in the format of a digital magazine, during the fellowship.

Emil Rodriguez is a tech entrepreneur and the co-founder of Xolutronic, an engineering firm that specializes in electronic product engineering and design services. Traditionally the company has offered research, product design, and development services to customers, and it recently started developing its own product line focused on solving global problems. In 2015, Emil led the team as it launched a crowdfunding campaign on the popular U.S. platform, Kickstarter. They raised over $100,000 to get their product PASSFORT to the market. PASSFORT is an electronic device that allows you to store unique and secure passwords for all digital accounts. By using USB/Bluetooth connectivity, PASSFORT users do not need to remember passwords. Mr. Rodriguez earned an engineering degree in Electronics and Telecommunications in 2007 from UNAPEC in the Dominican Republic.

Arístides Rubio is the Co-Founder and CEO of eCompany, a pioneer in online legal services in the Dominican Republic. eCompany helps entrepreneurs incorporate their businesses and secure their intellectual property rights, while guiding them through day-to-day compliance challenges without the inconvenience and high fees of traditional law firms. Arístides holds a Bachelor's Degree in Law from the Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE) where he graduated magna cum laude, as well as an LL.M. in International Business Law from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain. Aristides is also a World Economic Forum Global Shaper and an MBA candidate at Barna Business School in the Dominican Republic.

Ecuador

Andrea Almeida is a food engineer and started her own company, Ethniessence, which emphasizes natural and healthy foods such as snacks and tisanes (fruit and herb infusion). For their products, they use raw material such as lupinus (like an andean bean), sweet potato, and sweet plantain. Ethniessence works with native communities and has created alliances where they maintain a specific price throughout the year and support the communities with agricultural training workshops. They are selling their products at the local market, and are looking forward to exporting them to the U.S., for which they already have FDA permission. In addition, Ethniessence also provides services to other companies that need food research or product development.

Daniela Borja Kaisin is founder of NANKAIA, a social enterprise which encourages the use of bicycles as a way of commuting. NANKAIA designs and sells cycling apparel to a growing community of cyclists. The apparel is partially made of leftover material and produced by women in vulnerable situations. Daniela holds a degree in Graphic and Industrial Design. She currently volunteers with a community of passionate female cyclists in Quito that encourage and train women to bike with ReciVeci, a civil initiative for inclusive recycling.

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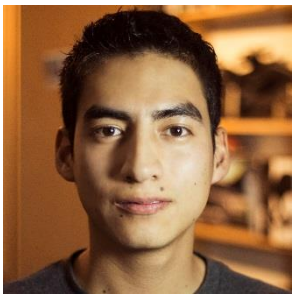
Participant Biographies



David Borja is an entrepreneur, technology enthusiast, and programmer. He created a website to buy food through the internet in Ecuador in 2012 after teaching himself programming online. The page is among the top 100 most visited Ecuadorian websites. Rocket Internet acquired their website in 2014. In 2015 they launched Multidoctores, a platform where patients can chat or have a video call with a doctor to expand services for telehealth.

Juan David Cifuentes is the CEO and Cofounder of Cifuentes-Strings, a musical strings company in Quito, Ecuador. They offer high quality music strings to professional musicians in their country. As a member of the entrepreneur's program of CONQUITO, the economic development department of the mayorship of Quito, he has achieved great recognition with Cifuentes-Strings. Juan has a Bachelor's degree in Corporate Communications from the Pontifical Catholic University of Quito. He is currently studying Gestalt Psychotherapy.

Marco Mendieta is the Co-Founder of Megamobilier, a company that manufactures and sells furniture for hair salons and spas, hospitals, universities, schools, and restaurants. He has a Master's Degree in International Business and Administration from the Universidad Catolica de Santiago de Guayaquil.

David Moreta currently works at CompuCare, a company that provides computer services for small business to help them grow and be more productive by taking care of their technology. The company also hires student freelancers in order to give them the opportunity to start their careers in technology by partnering with CompuCare. David was selected to represent Ecuador in the Global Student Entrepreneur Awards in Bangkok, Thailand in 2016. David is currently working towards completing his Systems Engineering degree at the University of Loja.

Elisa Muñoz is the founder of D'CUERO, an eCommerce startup that sells handmade leather shoes for men, a product made of 100% natural and chemical-free cowhide. The web platform helps Ecuadorian rural artisans to internationalize their product while supporting their socially and environmentally responsible practices. Elisa has a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations from the Universidad del Azuay. She has been developing D'CUERO since 2015 and has also worked at Acudec, a local development agency in Cuenca. She previously worked at the Ecuadorian-American Chamber of Commerce.

Danilo Salazar Ramos is the Founder and CEO of Origo Solutions, a startup focused on the development and implementation of cost-effective technologies for developing economies, particularly related to solar technologies. He previously worked at Huawei Technologies where he spent five years developing technological solutions for the connectivity of urban and rural zones in Ecuador. Danilo is an electrical and telecommunications engineer and entrepreneur with more than seven years of professional experience in technical deployment and project management. He graduated from ESPE in Quito, Ecuador.

El Salvador

Carmen Castellanos is the co-founder and CEO of Fashion Truck, the first pop up store in El Salvador. Fashion Truck is a boutique on wheels that travels to its customers. Fashion Truck aims to empower Salvadoran women through clothes so that they can achieve their goals and leave a legacy in the world. Carmen has a degree in Economics from Escuela Superior de Economia y Negocios (ESEN).

Cecilia Escalante is a creative artist and marketing specialist graduate from the Universidad Francisco Gavidia in El Salvador. She began her career in digital marketing in 2015, but never abandoned her education and love for the arts. After more than five years of practicing art, she founded Colourize. Colourize is a combination of classical art, digital art, branding, and digital marketing. Cecilia's vision is to create a commercial revolution for Salvadoran art. Through the power of art and culture, Colourize will help make her noble cause possible.

Violeta Martínez studied graphic design and is the founder of the leather accessory brand, VAIZA. She designs products that are handmade by artisan communities of El Salvador and also empowers them to create luxury design pieces. Violeta has a team of artisans who only use local materials as a means to make a positive impact in their country's economy. The Salvadoran fashion industry is in its initial phase, but she believes that they have the quality that an international market requires. VAIZA's goal is to become the first brand of internationally recognized Salvadoran designers.

Karla Pacheco is the director of the Cocrea Creative Agency which specializes in innovation consulting and strategic communication. The agency creates digital strategies with the intent that communication leads to a closer relationship with the brand. Karla is a Graphic Designer with a Master's Degree in Research for Design and Innovation.

Alejandra Pinto is an artist and founder of Reencuentros.co, an arts webpage that examines Salvadorian art created during the armed conflict. Alejandra hopes to encourage the art scene in El Salvador by promoting cultural projects and enhancing art education in the region. She has a B.A in Visual Arts and Urbanisation from New York University in Abu Dhabi. Alejandra is also a member of the Global Shapers Hub and works as a design professor at the Universidad José Matías Delgado.

Celia Ramírez is the co-founder of Keo Coco, a company that produces and distributes bottled coconut water in El Salvador. As the company's co-founder, she is committed to the successful development, management, and operation of the company. Celia is also highly committed to the economic and social development of her community. One of her primary local projects is the founding and operation of a community saving and loan cooperative. The cooperative assists women and children by providing secure saving and lending services and by teaching the importance of being conservative with savings and making good financial decisions. She has an Associate's Degree in Agricultural Business from Reedley College CA.

Julio Ramirez is a young entrepreneur who studied Strategic Design at the School of Communication Monica Herrera. Founded in 2014, MERCH is a company dedicated to creating textiles that support local brands and produce items for major brands. They are committed to innovation in branding and design. MERCH has a shop with a line of products available to the public that are created and designed in-house. Julio is the creator of SOLO EN SIVAR, a brand backed by social media, and also owns a popular clothing brand that is distributed nationally and exported by e-commerce.

Oscar Tadeo is the founder of UDP Aquetzalli, a startup that designs clothing dyed with indigo and other local plants. Aquetzalli also develops workshops in different parts of El Salvador. In these workshops artisans learn how to dye with indigo and other plants. He also helps as a volunteer in the different entrepeurship workshops that CONAMYPE (National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises) develops. Oscar is a technician in tourism and graduated from the Escuela Superior Franciscana Especializada. In 2014, he won a contest called Seamos Productivos sponsored by the Ministry of Education (MINED).

Grenada

Russel John is the founder and CEO of Archangel Investments, a Grenada-based organization created to increase access to funding and resources for non profits and small businesses in the Caribbean. Russel is a mathematics teacher and the founder of the AHS PLUS Extension School. In addition to this, he has collaborated in creative ventures with non profit and for profit entities, most notably with the Writers Association of Grenada. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Education from The University of The West Indies. Russel currently serves as the Vice President of the Grenada Coalition of Service Industries.

Quamme Joseph is the founder of Blue Bay International, an out-sourcing call center in Saint Georges, Grenada. Quamme is the author of the motivational book, "The Power of a Dream." He has worked at the National Commercial Bank of Grenada and served as president and CEO of Caribbean Flavours Ltd. He is also the director of Little New York store and Citern Seafood International. In 2008, Quamme was awarded for his outstanding accomplishments by the Prime Minister of Grenada and two years later was nominated by the Ministry of Youths & Sports for the National Youth Award.

Guatemala

Paola Alvarado is the founder and CEO of Grupo SCT, which is the first recruitment agency specialized in the hospitality and tourism industry. Grupo SCT also contributes to educational tourism through a Hospitality Internship Program. She participated in the Disney College Program and opened a hotel with a green certification. Paola has a BS in Hospitality and Restaurants Management from the Universidad Rafael Landívar, and has been a professor there for five years.

Roberto Cobaquil is the Cofounder and CFO of Coffee District, a coffee shop created to provide high-quality gourmet Guatemalan coffee and educate people on the coffee culture. He is a strong believer that entrepreneurship has a very important impact in the development of the society, especially in providing sources of employment. Roberto earned an Industrial Engineering degree from the Universidad San Carlos. Prior to developing his startup, Roberto spent the seven years working in logistics for national and international companies.

Lucía Cosenza is an artist, illustrator, and the owner and CEO of Cuenta Platos, the first enterprise to sell hand-painted porcelain in Guatemala. She studied architecture and graduated Cum Laude as a Graphic Designer in 2014. She has worked for startups based in Silicon Valley as well as for web development companies in the marketing department. She participated in the Youth Project Faces of Remembrance by EU Erasmus in Weimar, Germany in 2014, where she created a museum app for tourists and locals. Lucía is currently working on her art studio and manages an initiative called The Self As Image Project, in which she uses art therapy to helps women suffering from depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem problems.

Victor Juárez is the Co-Founder of Study Abroad Guatemala which provides short-term academic programs in Guatemala for U.S. undergraduate students. Victor has a degree in tourism and more than 6 years of experience in international education, which has helped him create linkages between Guatemala and the U.S. While working as an EducationUSA Adviser, he was able to develop skills that helped him support students with different profiles. As the head of the Office of International Affairs at the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, he was responsible for developing partnerships with different institutions, especially in the US.

Bibi la Luz Gonzalez has lived abroad for half of her life, which has enabled her to learn from different cultures and bring back valuable lessons to her home country. With an academic background in international political economy and development, she focuses on food security, migration, and democracy. Eat Better Wa'ik is a non-profit that creates food awareness on malnutrition. It focuses on education, access to food, budget, tastes, and adequate food intake. The organization's goal is to involve individuals at an early stage to radically change common misconceptions about food, specifically in urban areas. She first noticed the great misconception about food while working as IDB/MIF Project Coordinator in an NGO promoting women's empowerment. Bibi la is a positive and enthusiastic multilingual Global Shaper, One Young World Ambassador, World Merit Guatemala Office Representative, and Merit360 SDG2 Executor.

Jose Lucero has a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing and International Affairs and significant experience in customer service, brand management, and social media. His company, Gualet, manufactures and sells handmade magic wallets. Gualet uses different types of leathers and hand woven textiles in order to preserve the Guatemalan culture and history.

Diego Olivero is a social entrepreneur and driver of positive social and economic change in Guatemala. He graduated from The Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale with a degree in Industrial Design. In 2010, Diego co-founded The Mayan Store, a social enterprise that provides sustainable job opportunities for more than 550 artisans around Guatemala. The organization was recognized with the 2013 Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Exporter of the Year Award. The organization implements social projects to foster better livelihoods for artisans in collaboration with the Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund, Ministry of Economy of Guatemala, Feed the Future, Save the Children, and Guatemala's Exporters Association. His organization is an agent for community development for indigenous rural communities, catalyzing the power of business for social impact. Diego is also the creative director of Olivero Bland Studio, an Architecture and Interior Design firm that provides integrated solutions for commercial, residential, and hospitality projects.

Ana Maria Vasquez has over 13 years of work experience in the finance field and has worked in multinational consumer goods companies. Ana Maria is committed to helping companies grow their business and she provides financial consulting services through Consultores Profesionales. The business aims to provide guidance, advice, and consulting services regarding accounting, finance, sales, and tax procedures to small and medium enterprises.

Guyana

Dason Anthony is a one of the owners of 592Dresses, which was founded in July 2015. 592Dresses assists boutiques and local designers to sell, market, and advertise their products through its online marketplace. He developed this company because there are not many websites that can help customers receive clothing via home delivery in Guyana. The company has demonstrated that it can break the barriers of online shopping in Guyana and build its own brand.

Judason Bess is the co-owner and manager of The Farmacy, a company that focuses on making agriculture and food production more sustainable. Recently he completed his agriculture degree at the University of Guyana. Judason also served as president of the campus agriculture club. He has been able to apply his practical and academic knowledge to his entrepreneurial efforts.

Abbigale Loncke has spent most of her adult life helping those in need. Community Health Care is an agency that delivers home care needs for the elderly, sick, disabled and children in the comfort of their homes while training women who are in need of employment and second chances to take up roles as caregivers. They hold a two-fold mandate, which is primarily to provide training and employment for women and young ladies and also to provide care and support for Guyana's most vulnerable persons. Abbigale has been counseling young people in institutional care since 2006. While pursuing her studies in Psychology, she also worked in home care, taking care of elderly and vulnerable individuals, which contributed to her love for caring for individuals.

Shaunda Yarde founded Coconut Grove with her grandmother's recipe in 2013. She uses fresh local ingredients to make a culturally rooted product, Golden Crunch Coconut Biscuits. The biscuits were part of Moray House 2015 Christmas Parcel and Guyana's 2016 Golden Jubilee welcome package. Shaunda has worked within the local media corps and in marketing and advertising. She studied Public Communication at the University of Guyana and graduated with honours.

Haiti

Lyne Vanessa Alexandre is the CEO of Procona, a candy production company focused on the use of raw materials, such as banana, pistachio, ginger, and yams. These products will be locally-sourced and provide options for local Haitian farmers. Lyne was previously the President of the Association des jeunes impliquées socialement, a civil society organization committed to strengthening the capacity of Haitian youth. She has a Master's Degree in Medicine from the State University of Haiti and a Bachelor's Degree in Law from the State University of Haiti.

Mélineda Jean Baptiste is the founder and CEO of Rebèl, a Haiti-based company created in 2016, and committed to creating positive and lasting impacts in Haiti, especially in the lives of young men and women. The organization inspires young people to protect the environment by collecting plastic, glass, and iron waste left in the streets to make art products out of them. The items created are sold on the national market, and the funds support education in Haiti. Mélineda studied Applied Economics and works as an economic consultant, currently on a project focused on improving civil society participation in the national budgetary process.

Jacques Kendy Bellegarde has a Bachelor's degree in Economics. He founded Kendy's Laundry along with his partner, Pou Ayiti Pwòp. Kendy's Laundry is a comprehensive solution for dry waste management, transforming it into energy and useful tools. He also founded Kwabosal.ht, the very first ecommerce website in Haiti, which gives an online presence to young entrepreneurs. Jacques previously worked for Cure International. Additionally, he is also a leadership adviser for two youth community groups and leads entrepreneurship and project management courses in a church group. Jacques is fully dedicated to expanding Kwabosal.ht so that he can empower young leaders and entrepreneurs.

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Melior Joseph is the founder of CHOCOMAX-HAITI, a startup specializing in cocoa processing in Haiti. CHOCOMAX's mission is to value the Haitian cocoa by offering locally made products such as chocolate, chocolate-cream, and cocoa-butter. Melior has a Bachelor's Degree in Law, and offers consultations and training on subjects such as civil society organizations and NGOs, food security, entrepreneurship, and social business. In 2014 Melior was selected as one of the Digicel Entrepreneurs of the Year in Haiti.

Jacob Michel is cofounder of VERTE, a company whose objective is to provide ecological and sustainable portabale drinking water solutions to the Haitian population. He is also the founder of several small companies, such as Haitian Mobile Entertainment, which has the international company of mobile phones DIGICEL as an executive partner. He also founded STATIS which is a consultancy firm in statistical and economic studies. Jacob is a statistician and economist with a master's degree in Population and Development. He has worked as a Strategic Information Advisor and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist in various social, health, and development projects for UNDP, FHI360 and CARE International during the last five years. He also worked as an Impact Evaluation Consultant for the Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) on behalf of the World Bank.

Dr. Valéry Moise co-founded Diagnostik Group, a non-profit health organization aimed at ensuring a healthy start for children. Valéry earned a PhD in medicine at the Faculty of Medicine, Haiti State's University. He also holds a triple certification in Children Rights at Moncton University, a certification in Parliamentarism from Laval University, and a certification in Technical Journalism and Web Tools from RFI-Mondoblog, Senegal.

Ann-Sophie Oville is a social entrepreneur in Haiti and is the Founder and CEO of Mennen'm La Tours. The organization's main goal is to introduce social and sustainable tourism by working with local communities. Mennen'm La is able to increase the revenue of local families by creating jobs. Ann-Sophie also wants to give hope to young people through commercializing their talents so that tourists can enjoy their artistic abilities.

Makendy Smith is the co-founder, CEO, and Creative Director of MAK PA NOU CREATION, a handcrafted sandals production company incorporated in 2010. He studied Fine Arts at the National School of Arts (ENARTS) and Management of Cultural Organizations at the University of the State of Haiti (UEH). Makendy was named Artisan of the Year in 2011 by the Ministry of Tourism and the newspaper, *Lenouvelliste*. He has trained many young people in making hand-crafted sandals in Haiti. Makendy was also one of two entrepreneurs selected as part of the joint program between Cedel Haiti and the University of Florida called Economic Empowerment in Haiti (EEH) in 2016.

Honduras

Michael Avila is the founder of StartUp Honduras, an initiative to foster a technology startup ecosystem in Honduras and the Central American region. He wants to empower entrepreneurs in business and entrepreneurship education to start and grow global businesses that will create more jobs, strengthen global connections, and boost the Honduran economy. He has founded several tech ventures since 2011 including @Hondurapps, a local business and tourism blackberry app; @Ranking Play, a sport fan platform; @classludi, an educational platform; @FundersHN, an equity crowdfunding platform; and @StartUp Honduras. Michael is a member of Emerging Leaders of Honduras, the Global Entrepreneurship Network, Social Entrepreneurs Group, ADHD aware, and Coffee Connections.

Carlos Espinoza is the Co-Founder of Club Menkar, a center that creates opportunities for teenagers to learn about art, entrepreneurship, human values, spiritual concerns, and academic and personal improvement. Carlos is the Executive Director of Fundación Taular, a non-profit institution aimed at promoting self-improvement, academic success, and professional training for students from homes with limited economic resources. He studied civil engineering and is now pursuing a master's degree in project management at Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana.

Cesar Gallardo was born in La Ceiba, Honduras and is the director of Dona un Libro, Cambia una Mente (Donate a Book, Change a Mind), which aims to create and strengthen school and community libraries on a national scale. The organization also provides training and workshops to parents, teachers, school administrative staff, and children. Its long-term vision is to become a registered non-profit and expand to include other educational initiatives. Cesar graduated from CEUTEC Honduras with a Marketing degree and has experience working in international companies such as Samsung and Direct Electronics.

Juan Luis Laínez Mejia is completing his last year of medical school at the National Autonomous University of Honduras. He currently works on various medical research projects while participating in a university teacher-training program. He coordinates over 200 medical students completing their social service graduation requirements in communities throughout Honduras. Juan Luis founded a social enterprise called Voy por Honduras, whose mission is to organize groups of young professionals committed to making social change through creating volunteer opportunities for their peers and helping promote social work in underserved communities. The groups strive to create a culture of community service in order to build a more dignified and equitable society. Juan Luis believes the dreams of these young professionals are achievable and a good leader has the responsibility to help others turn their dreams into realities.

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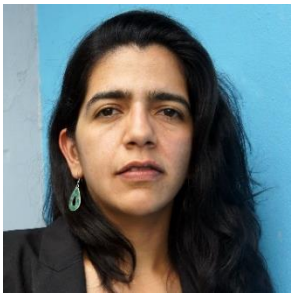
Participant Biographies

Marco Meza is the founder of Home Art Decoration, an online store that embraces cultural diversity and promotes artisan talents. All products are produced locally, and they use quality material, which is rare in the market. Marco will soon finish his degree in Business Administration and aims to pursue a master's degree in Finance.

Edwin Benjamin Rajo is the founder of Theolicious, a cocoa farm and chocolate manufacturing company. Theolicious also provides technical assistance to cocoa farmers who provide raw material to the company to ensure sustainable, efficient, and environmentally-friendly practices. Benjamin has a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Sciences and Production from the Zamorano Panamerican Agricultural School, and is currently working as the General Manager of Theolicious.

Johny Rios is the CEO and manager of Taan Kanik Academy, which supports and educates children who normally could not afford to pay for English classes. He also teaches English to company employees who typically pay higher prices for services. His goal is to make billingual education available for most people in his town. Johny previously worked for Habitat for Humanity and has a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Engineering from the Univerisdad Catolica de Honduras.

Sharon Salinas is the Marketing CEO at Snap de Honduras. Their company is dedicated to manufacturing the best tropical fruit concentrate in Honduras. Since she founded the company with her sister in 2014, they won the prize for best new company in 2015 by the Commerce of Chamber of Honduras. Sharon has a bachelor's degree in Marketing from the Universidad Autonoma de Honduras.



Melina Torres Funes comes from a family of journalists and has always been influenced by social, cultural, and political topics. She studied architecture in Mexico and returned to Honduras following graduation to work with a private construction company. Melina studied urban design in Barcelona and began to create her own business, El Taller, in 2015. El Taller creates products, manages projects, and generates innovative proposals about social, historical, cultural, and artistic topics.

Jamaica

Patria-Kaye Aarons is the CEO of the Jamaican candy company, Sweetie. Dedicated to satisfying the sweet tooth of Caribbean people, Sweetie products capture bold, authentic island flavors like mango and guava. Sweetie is distributed to 150 Jamaican retail locations and exports to the US, UK, and Caribbean. She has previously worked on marketing campaigns for Digicel and GraceKennedy. She also worked with Western Union and Sharp. Patria-Kaye holds a BA in Media and Communications from the University of the West Indies and an MSc in Management from the University of Edinburgh.

Craslyn Benjamin began small backyard farming with her grandfather and is now farming and producing on a wide scale production level. She seeks to model and invest in the development of the agricultural sector in Jamaica, particularly through her company, Benlar Foods Limited. Benlar's core function is focused on producing and selling high quality fresh fruits and vegetable products for the domestic and international markets. Craslyn has garnered over twelve years of experience in the shipping and allied industry and has over four years of experience in export marketing and international trade. Prior to Benlar Foods Limited, she worked at Grace Foods International as a Customer Relations Officer. Craslyn holds a diploma in International Shipping and a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Logistics and Supply Chain Management from the Caribbean Maritime Institute. She is an official Branson Centre Entrepreneur.

Tishauna Mullings is the owner of NexxStepp Personal Development Services and Inspirational Products, a company aimed at maximizing their customer's potential by offering inspirational products and services. NexxStepp will offer the following services: tutoring for major school exams, reading classes, life purpose coaching, career consultancy, and personal and professional development seminars. She has been recognized for several awards, including the Governor General of Jamaica Vision of Love Video Competition and Achievement Award in 2015 and 2016. She was also nominated for the Prime Minister's Youth Award in Youth Work in 2012. Tishauna works as a freelance motivational speaker and is now preparing to publish her book, "Ready, Set, Go - The Youngsters Manual For the Road to Success."

Javette Nixon is the Founder, President, and CEO of Point Global Marketing Limited (POINT) a marketing and brand development firm that focuses on the marketing and brand design of growth companies. He is also the director of Vein Centers of Jamaica. Prior to forming POINT, he founded his first business at the age of 23, an e-commerce business exporting Jamaican products. He has also worked at Edgechem Jamaica Limited, and Capital & Credit Merchant Bank. In addition, he has done extensive community work through organizations such as St. Thomas Association of Youth Organization (STAYO) and the Social & Economic Alliance for Development (SEAD), a policy-oriented organization that supports national developmental programs, and policymaking. He holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science & Economics from the University of the West Indies and is a graduate of the Technology Innovation Centre Incubator program at the University of Technology as well as the Branson Centre of Entrepreneurship.

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Participant Biographies

Kadeem Pet-Grave is co-founder and CEO of Educatours JA Ltd, a Jamaican-based educational tour company powered by gamification and technology. Educatours plans and executes 'gamified' field trips (tours) and team building exercises for schools and other groups. The tours incorporate the use of mobile apps and game elements in an effort to ensure fun, engaged, and experiential learning. The company began operations in January 2015 and to date, over 1000 students have experienced Educatours' tours and exercises. Educatours not only sells experiential learning but also acts as a social enterprise working to empower and inspire young people via tours. Educatours is a member of Social Enterprise Boost Initiative (SEBI Jamaica), a program spearheaded by the Jamaica National Foundation. Kadeem graduated from the University of the West Indies in 2014 with a degree in Entrepreneurship. He is also a part-time high school entrepreneurship teacher.

Renee Stewart is committed to helping young women who are housed in state-owned juvenile facilities through her initiative, A Home for Girls Foundation. Once they reach the age of 18, young women are eligible to leave the juvenile facilities, and the initiative seeks to empower these young ladies through grooming, mentorship, continuing education, career guidance, and job search assistance. Renee is a licensed hairstylist with a steady clientele. She is also a fashion designer and CEO of her own company - Haute Apparel Ltd.

Latoya West-Blackwood founded iPublish Consultancy and its imprint, iMagiNation Books, as part of her longstanding love affair with books and reading. iPublish is Jamaica's first registered full-service publishing consultancy, and it offers a range of support services from its base in Kingston, Jamaica to clients worldwide. From editorial and design, to digital distribution and marketing, iPublish provides customized solutions to self-publishers, corporate clients, and educational institutions. iMagiNation was created as an outlet for works across various genres showcasing the best of Jamaica to the world via new stories, voices, and media. Latoya is a Branson Centre of Entrepreneurship (Caribbean) Official Entrepreneur and Chairman of the Book Industry Association of Jamaica. She is passionate about volunteering and supports several community-based and non-profit initiatives promoting literacy and reading.

Miguel 'Steppa' Williams works as a social outreach specialist, adjunct lecturer, motivational speaker, creative writer and dub poet. He is the founder and a director of the Forward Step Foundation, a NGO catering to the needs of high risk youth and communities. Steppa serves as a programmer and life coach in several of Jamaica's adult and juvenile correctional centers. He is a behaviour modification trainer who works in areas of community safety and security, gang reduction, re-integration and rehabilitation. Steppa is particularly talented at applying creative therapy and the advocacy model in areas of social enterprise development.

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Participant Biographies

Mexico

Luis de Anda is the Co-Founder of Café Local, an organization focused on the creation of high quality coffee. Café Local supports partner producers to ensure quality and increase income. Café Local is committed to tackling poverty by creating a connection between coffee and its producers. He previously worked as an Account Manager for Sales at Philips Healthcare. Luis took industrial engineering classes at the Universidad Iberoamericana.

Mónica Camacho is passionate about technology and how it can empower people, which is why she created La Cosita Chula, a platform that helps market products made by artisans and small producers. This not only empowers and encourages entrepreneurship from talented individuals, it also highlights Mexico's great cultural richness. Mónica previously worked for 5 years at Microsoft where she combined the application of technology and enterprise strategy to help organizations achieve their business goals. She has a Bachelor's degree from the IPN - UPIICSA.

Yolanda Cantu Garcia's biggest passion is children's welfare. Coet Learning Center is a private institution which develops specialized learning materials such as manuals, game boards, flashcards, speech sound materials and books for children who struggle due to a learning disability. Yolanda has Bachelor's degrees in Family Science and Psychology.

Emmanuel Gama is currently an advisor for a federal institution in Mexico which is in charge of regulating the health industry. He is also committed to the start-up TukTuk, which is devoted to finding a faster and more sustainable way to move people in a major city. TukTuk can take people from one place to another, by motorcycle-taxi, in half the time they would usually spend when using a traditional taxi.

Vania Ledesma has been teaching English for more than 12 years, and she is committed to providing high-quality bilingual education to vulnerable groups, particularly through Language Education Possible. The organization is supported and run by volunteers. She holds a B.A. in English Language Teaching, a Master's Degree in Education, and an MSc. in Developmental Linguistics.

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Jesus Leyva is the Co-founder and Technology Leader of a social program called Profesionalización de la Docencia, which is focused on providing training for public school teachers who are in need of new and modern skills. Jesus has a Bachelor's Degree in International Business from Tec de Monterrey. He went on an exchange program at Schulich School of Business-York University in Canada in 2012 on a scholarship from the Emerging Leaders in the Americas Program (ELAP); this was sponsored by the Canadian government. He is also launching a startup along with his co-founder and team called SnapVisits that is focused on virtual reality.

Fernando Márquez is Founder and Director General of Youth with Vision, an organization that fosters social leadership, cross-cultural understanding, and global citizenship. It also brings opportunites and quality education to youth in Mexico. He has a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations, and he is pursuing a Master's Degree in Regional Development at COLEF. He has more than four years of experience working in NGOs and non-profits and has spent three years as the Director of Youth with Vision.

Carlos Molina is the co-founder of GIR Technologies, a startup focused on the creation of biotechnology and biomedical equipment. The startup is currently focused on the research and development phase. Carlos is also the co-founder of Laboratorios Etrederm, a company that since 2012 has been dedicated to the creation, production, and distribution of accessible dermatological specialties throughout the Mexican southeast. Additionally, Carlos is a guest lecturer of biotechnological entrepreneurship at the University of Yucatan. He holds a BS in Chemical Engineering, a post-graduate degree in Business Administration with a focus on Entrepreneurship, and a post-graduate degree on Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering with a focus on Regenerative Medicine.

Frissia Monsivais is the founder of First Leadership Center, a program which helps young females enhance their inner skills and abilities to promote self-empowerment. She is committed to helping young girls have better professional and personal growth. She has one associate's degree and three bachelor's degrees in education and business management. She also has a Master´s Degree on TEFL, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. In addition, she works for the National Association of Technological Universities and volunteers at Fundacion Grupo Modelo. She is a Toastmaster International member.

Mario Nájera is dedicated to the development of successful impact models with an educational focus for young people in vulnerable conditions. He is the founder and CEO of Laboratorio Social Mx and they focus on empowering young people from urban slums by fostering industry and local projects. Laboratorio Social Mx attempts to foster entrepreneurship among young people.

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Participant Biographies

Ingrid Orozco is the Co-Founder and CEO of Mujeres de las Américas and the Chief Marketing Officer of Mujer Emprende, both Mexican organizations focused on women's development and economic empowerment in Mexico and Latin America. They also focus on boosting high social impact projects, as well as on English education. Ingrid is an internationalist; an expert in diplomacy, strategy, business expansion, and investment attraction; and she has had a dynamic career developing and implementing several projects in America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Middle East. She has also worked on behalf of other governments to reach international agreements, and worked on the design of the first event for women leaders in the Pacific Alliance region.

Efraín Orozco González is co-founder of Ubicuo Tech, a Mexican company focused on the development of technology platforms that allow societal participation in competitiveness and consumer services optimization. Gazú, its first app, was launched in summer 2016. Gazú is a conscious consumption tool that allows the user to assess, share, and comment on the reliability level, social and environmental responsibility, and service quality at Mexican gas stations. He was recognized as a social entrepreneur in 2014 for a project called WIXABIKLA as part of his co-founded NGO (ARSA, Social - Environmental Regeneration Agency), which solved mobility issues in indigenous wixaritari communities by using bicycles, installing mechanical workshops, and providing trainings. Efraín holds a degree in Environmental Engineering from the ITESO University in Guadalajara, where he is now a teacher.

José Reyes founded Estrenon, a for-profit social enterprise that disrupts poverty's cycle of low self-esteem and exclusion by promoting the clothing reuse movement in Latin America. He was named The Young Social Entrepreneur of the Year in 2014, and he became the first and only Latin American winning the Diamond Award in MassChallenge Boston, the biggest accelerator and competition of entrepreneurs in the world in 2015. José has a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing from the Universidad Panamericana Campus Guadalajara. He previously worked at PepsiCo Bebidas Mexico and at the Footwear Chamber in Jalisco. He has experience in marketing, research and development, project management, organizational culture, public relations, and corporate social responsibility.

Yesenia Sanchez founded Yes Sanchez in 2013, where she designs and produces artisanal products for women. The Mexican design and accessory brand is committed to helping the environment, and the company selects recycled and ecological materials. She also works for the government institution FONART where she is in charge of developing textile projects in rural areas. She graduated from the Jesuit Universidad Iberoamericana with a degree in textile design in 2011.

Germán Santillan Ugarte is the CEO and Founder of Oaxacanita Chocolate, a company which strives for the economic development of the Oaxacan Mixteca by hiring artisan cooks and palm craftsmen and by using local raw materials. Thanks to this project, Germán jumpstarted the cultivation of cacao to provide jobs to regional farmers and reactivate the Oaxacan field. In 2014, Germán completed his Business Science degree at the Tecnological University of the Mixteca, and in 2015 won the performance award of national academic excellence presented by EGEL CENEVAL. Germán is also the Finance Director of Sanfri Refrigeración Comercial, a company that provides industrial equipment to the food industry. He is the External Communications Manager for the Iluminarte Espacio Creativo art gallery, which is a non-profit organization that helps local visual artists of the Mixteca to maximize their potential.

Nicaragua

Jose Ayerdis is the founder and CEO of Pozool, a mobile point of sale application. Pozool is a free suite of business solutions for restaurants and other small retail establishments. Its goal is to help small and new entrepreneurs in Latin America acquire technology to manage and grow their organizations. Specializing in web and mobile development, he has vast experience working with innovative companies like booking.com, stubhub, Mercon Coffee, and with international NGOs like World Relief. Jose earned his engineering degree in Computer Systems Engineering in 2010 from the Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería in Managua, Nicaragua. He was named the best programmer in 2007 by UNAN Managua.

Alejandro Escoto has consulting experience in logistics industries, agriculture and real estate development. AESA is a social enterprise that promotes rural development by selling high-quality products derived from our beehives in Nicaragua. He also has experience in banking, particularly in the areas of Financial Analysis. In addition, he has worked as an Assistant Manager in the Microfinance Industry. Alejandro has a Master's Degree in Business Administration (INCAE) and a BA in Economics from the University Thomas More in Nicaragua.

Francisco González is the co-founder of Tu Cleta, an online shop for restored vintage bicycles that aims to contribute to environmental sustainability and urban mobility efficiency in Nicaraguan cities. Tu Cleta also takes pride in promoting local talented technicians and artisans. Francisco studied Architecture at the Universidad Centroamericana in Nicaragua and has a Master´s Degree in Sustainable Architecture from the Instituto Politécnico Nacional in Mexico. He also works as a college professor in architectural design and is a partner in a consulting firm.

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Participant Biographies

Massiel Hidalgo Rocha is Partner and Account Director of SIMO Nicaragua, a young and dynamic company that provides solutions to businesses of all sectors in the areas of corporate communication and digital marketing. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Social Communication from the Universidad Centroamericana. She is a new technology enthusiast and has experience in corporate communications and radio and TV production.

Guillermo Jimenez is the CEO and Co-Founder of the online store Eleganza Boutique, an entrepreneurial idea that began in 2012 as a pioneer in Nicaragua's e-commerce. He was crowned as the National Champion of the Global Student Entrepreneur Award presented by Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO). He has a Master's Degree in Systems Engineering from the Universidad Nacional de Ingenieria.

Diana Miranda is the CEO and Co-Founder of Ditex. It has been her goal to ensure that the products made in her country occupy a priority place in national consumption, which is why she founded Ditex, a company devoted to textile design and finding a way to make these products marketable not only locally, but internationally as well. Her desire is to offer consumers high quality, fashionable products at affordable prices. The company supports the economy and empowers women. In 2010 she worked as an assistant in Japan for an independent living program for people with disabilities. Diana has a degree in Product Design and graduated from the Universidad Politecnica de Nicaragua in 2012

Cristell Montenegro founded Mundo de Sabores, the first ice cream parlor in San Rafael del Norte (SRN). The shop provides a recreational option and contributes to local development. In 2013, she was selected by the Organization of American States (OAS) as the winner of a scholarship to study for her MBA at ITESM in Mexico. Now, she is developing Coffee Lovers, the first coffee shop in SRN, because she wants to transform her society and create value for consumers, the community, suppliers, investors, and coworkers and also create a healthy lifestyle and environmental consciousness. Currently, she is working as a supervisor in the National Institute of Social Security where she has worked for 3 years in human resources.

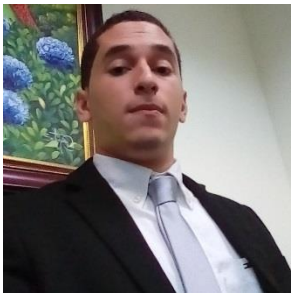
Deyanira Muñoz is passionate supporter of sustainable business and founder of TH (Third Hand), a retail company that will transform second hand fabric and clothes into new articles of clothing. She is concerned about the impact of the garment industry on the environment. Deyanira is a finance and accounting student currently located in Nicaragua, and she plans to graduate in 2017.

Noel Sampson is the Co-founder and Director of Emerge, a company that provides specialized professional services and innovative solutions on urban development, housing, development cooperation, sustainable architecture, and disaster risk reduction in cities that are currently facing the challenges of rapid urbanization and the impacts of climate change. Prior to founding Emerge in 2015, Noel founded the Dev Studio, a platform that promotes architecture as a means for social development. Previously, he worked and collaborated with different international organizations in Vietnam, Mongolia, Switzerland, Palestine, and Nicaragua including UN-Habitat and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Noel holds a Master's Degree in International Cooperation and Urban Development from TU Darmstadt, Germany, and has studied in Sweden, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Esther Vargas is the CEO of Hotel Hacienda Merida and Co-Founder of Ometepe Bilingual School. Her work focuses on finding sustainable ways to further develop the school while improving conditions on the island. Hacienda Merida and Ometepe Bilingual School are nestled on the shore of Lake Nicaragua. Hacienda Merida is a small eco-hotel and home base to her social, environmental, and education initiatives. She graduated from the Academic English Program at Ave Maria University.

Panama

Stephanie Braddick is the Founder and Chief Creative Officer at BRDKGreen – Stitch Bees, a fashion business that creates garments using natural and organic fabrics. She previously worked as a Credit Analyst at Dell in their finance department where she focused on computer sales, manufacturing, and distribution. Stephanie has a degree in Fashion Production, Distribution, and Merchandise from the Universidad del Caribe.



Gerardo Huertas is the founder and president of Young Entrepreneurs Working for Panama (AJOEM Panama), which seeks to meet the needs of entrepreneurs so that they can address social, educational, and environmental issues. He is also the founder and CEO of Panama Virtual Business. Additionally, Gerardo is the founder and CEO of Physical Activities for Health Foundation. Gerardo has an International Business degree from the Latin University of Panama.

Ytzvan Mastino is the co-founder of Triptable, a tech platform which connects travelers with local tour providers, and empowers local community tour guides with the tools to offer their services to the world. Ytzvan is also the leader of PanamaJS, the largest community of software developers based in Panama City. In 2014, he and his team won the first edition of Startup Weekend Central America. Since 2011, Ytzvan has spoken on topics related to software development, entrepreneurship, and technology. He is passionate about helping empower young entrepreneurs to succeed. Ytzvan has received a Bachelor's Degree in Systems Engineering.

Maria Alexandra Roper is the Co-Founder of Mi Maid Xpress, a start-up that provides on-demand cleaning services. Maria and her business partner founded Mi Maid Xpress after acquiring seed funding from the National Secretariat of Science and Technology of Panama. Going farther than breaking into the cleaning business, the company's mission is to provide job opportunities for low income women. Maria holds a Bachelor's Degree in Law and Political Science from the Universidad Santa María La Antigua and an MSc in Innovation and Entrepreneurship from The University of Warwick.

Maria Fernanda is the co-founder of Volunteer San Blas, a social business that strives to address challenges in the indigenous communities of Panama's Caribbean coast by offering impactful and hands-on volunteering programs. Maria is also part of Selina Hostels team, a start-up and disruptive hostels chain based in Panama, that is expanding to all of Latin America. She worked for AIESEC, the largest youth-led organization in the world, and had different leadership roles in Brazil and Panama. She graduated with a degree in Social Communication, and she has extensive experience in human resources.

Ana Mercedes Townshend is the founder and CEO of La Esquina de Charlotte, a small virtual shop that was created in 2009 to sell handmade accessories, such as necklaces, bracelets, headbands, and clips. It has since evolved into a shop selling handbags and makeup as well. She is currently working at Bancolombia Panamá as a Quality Management Analyst. Ana worked at SGS Panamá and at Copa Airlines. She studied Administrative Industrial Engineering at Universidad Católica Santa María la Antigua.

Paraguay

Rodrigo Alvarenga is the Project Manager at Brandi Handy, which provides business planning and branding services to entrepreneurs who want to further develop their communities. They create quality media and advertising and encourage the growth of the creative sector. Rodrigo has taken courses in Communications and Journalism as well as Veterinary Studies from the Universidad Nacional de Asuncion.

Gustavo Díaz is the General Coordinator of El Cantaro, a social enterprise that uses the power of art to transform our society. El Cantaro is an art shop that sells native, popular, and contemporary art, with the aim of maintaining a handmade cultural heritage and the artistic identity of Paraguay. El Cantaro also supports a Popular BioSchool, which offers the opportunity for young people to develop not only artistic expressions, but integral aspects of community values. This is done through a diverse array of free workshops and talks. This BioSchool was hand-built by the participants and the community. Gustavo has also been executive director of Sumando, an education NGO, and president of the city of Aregua's Water Council.

Marisol Jara Hüttemann is Co-Founder of Ouroga.com, a website that brings together people with similar housing needs and aims to improve quality of life through the benefits of shared living space. Marisol studied Communications and Advertising, worked for 5 years as an audiovisual producer, and served as a Communication Manager for a non-profit organization that promotes inclusion of people with disabilities. She also worked for a non-profit organization that designs and executes environmental projects. She believes that communication, film, and technology are powerful means of social change.

Manuel Peña cofounded Ojo de Pez, an advertising agency, in 2005. He also founded Periferia, a public relations agency. Since then, he has founded several additional startups: Parámetro, which deals with Credit Sales; Teo, a web, mobile, and logistics platform; Dínamo, which deals with corporate events; and Agroganadera Las Lomas. Ojo de Pez won Ad Agency of the Year in Paraguay in 2012, and has won 3 grand prix in the Tatakua for Advertising Awards. Manuel was chosen as the Young Businessman of the Year in 2012 by the ADEC (Asociación de Empresarios Cristianos). He is currently serving as Vice President for the Asociación Paraguaya de Agencias de Publicidad. Manuel graduated from the Boston University School of Management in 2003

Sady Sarquis is presenting a project called Cali – Communications, a consultancy that aims to target advertising agencies and support their communications efforts and audiovisual projects. Sady worked at Amnesty International in the communications department. Following that, she worked as a freelancer providing consulting services to different companies, advertising agencies, and social organizations. Sady studied journalism at the Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción.

Peru

Alexandra Cáceres is currently the CFO of Compadre, a social startup that strives to increase small farmers' revenue using solar-powered technologies. She has a Bachelor's degree in business management from San Ignacio de Loyola University and has been working on local startups for three years. She focuses on improving business processes and renewing the business model according to market demands. She is very interested in agriculture, technology, and venture capital.

Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative

Participant Biographies

Carlos Casiano is the General Manager of Ingeniería & Bioproyectos S.A.C., which is dedicated to civil engineering projects and environmental management. They are particularly focused on sustainable development. He previously served as an environmental consultant for ERM Peru S.A. He studied environmental engineering at Toribio Rodriguez de Mendoza National University.

Alvaro Concha is the Founder and President of Hack Space Peru Association, a non-profit organization that spreads the hacker and maker culture among young people by organizing programs and activities. These young people now have access to new opportunities, and they are generating new initiatives and technology. He is a member of the planning team at FabLab at the Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería, and he has been involved in the administration of their Digital Manufacturing Laboratory. In 2015, he also worked as a Director at the Roberto Carcelen Foundation, an NGO that trains underprivileged youth with software development skills. Alvaro is pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería.

Luz Delgado is the Founder and CEO of Lucci, a company dedicated to the manufacture and trading of sweet low-calorie sugar-free confectionery products. These products are catered towards Peruvian consumers who cannot consume sugar due to diabetes, obesity, or other conditions. Lucci seeks to improve their quality of life by offering a healthy product. Currently, it has a line of sweet sugar-free chocolates. The business promotes fair trade by purchasing from cocoa smallholders. Luz has a Bachelor's Degree in Education from the Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya. She is a member of AMEP, an Association of Women Entrepreneurs in Peru.

Rosario Diaz Garavito is the founder of The Millennials Movement, which started as a social media youth-lead movement to promote youth empowerment in local communities. Its mandate is to facilitate development and societal change by sharing information and involving local communities in global development processes. They work with young people to develop leadership skills. Rosario is a Youth Advocate for the UN SDG Action Campaign and a member of the UN The World We Want Working PSG Group. She is involved in gender equality advocacy and she was selected as a UN Women Empower Women Champion. With a Bachelor's Degree in Law, she is currently a student in the Master's Degree Program of Political Science and Governance at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru.

Cristian Gutierrez Zevallos is the co-founder of Evea Ecofashion, a social company focused on forest conservation and Amazonian community development through sustainable fashion. In 2015 the production ministry of Peru choose Evea to be part of the second generation of Startup Peru. Cristian also founded Delinatur, a startup that produces ice cream for diabetics. He has studied Administration at the Universidad de Lima and completed his postgraduate work in Agribusiness at the Universidad del Pacifico - Lima. He also completed postgraduate work in International Business at EAE (Barcelona) and IPAG (Paris).

Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative

Participant Biographies

Francisco Levi is the founder of Luya Coffee Company, a local coffee brand that provides a tourist experience in the interior of Peru. Customers get high quality organic coffee while participating in a tourist experience pertaining to the coffee making process. This project brings opportunities and technical knowledge to the coffee industry in the community of Luya. Prior to this project, Francisco worked at CARE as Head of Marketing, launching the first television advertisement for CARE Latin America. He has also worked in advertising for DRAFT FCB. Francisco has a Bachelor's Degree in Communications Science.

Isaac Malca Ruiz is one of the founders of a collective social innovation group called Amaze. He and his team have been able to generate different projects such as TuMicro, YoDonoVida.com, and The Dotbook Project. He was awarded a full scholarship by Team Academy, an entrepreneurship university. He was a student at the Universidad del Pacífico, and he represented the university's debate team.

Cyntia Paytan is the CEO and Founder of SONQO & MAQUI ("Heart & Hand" in Quechua language), a social business which aims to promote sustainable development through education and environmental programs focused on human behavior. She holds a Master's Degree in Sustainable Management from EUDE Business School, a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology from UNCP, and specializations in corporate social responsibility and management. She has more than ten years of experience leading social projects. She has been involved in local and global organizations related to education and the environment.

Gabriela Saldana is the Co-Founder of Ando Reparando, a Peruvian organization that seeks to change the history of professional technicians. Ando Reparando was born from the team's passion for helping others and the need to satisfy the current demand for household repairs. Gabriela has solid experience in finance leading new projects, simulating scenarios, and strategic planning. In 2014, she graduated from the University of Lima as an Industrial Engineer.

Brian Stefano started his own company called ITACA, which is a leadership school for young people. It started with only 28 students, and its message about leadership and entrepreneurship has reached more than 10,000 young people in his country. He is the manager of design and marketing and teaches workshops about forming soft skills. His passion focuses on education and social impact, and during his university studies he implemented four social projects in his community, all of which were about education, leadership, and entrepreneurship. Now, he is a CLC Life Coach endorsed by ILC Academy and the IAPLC International Association of Professional Life Coaches. He is the manager responsible for the expansion of Itaca all over the country of Perú and Latin America.

Sandra Valle is the CEO, Fashion Designer, and Founder of INSECTA, an eco-fashion company that manufactures innovative bags and backpacks inspired by nature. She is a Peruvian entrepreneur in the textile industry. She wants to preserve the environment through ecological and animal cruelty-free materials. Sandra also believes in social change through art, and she promotes local artists. She is a member of the Ecological Art Workshop Entre Artes. Sandra graduated from Chio Lecca Fashion School and has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from the IPAE Institute.

St. Kitts and Nevis

Necola Charles is the Founder and President of DTI – Driven to Inspire, an institute that is geared toward providing young people between the ages of 15 and 35 with financial guidance and tips through coaching and mentoring opportunities. The institute will also provide aspiring young entrepreneurs within the Caribbean with the necessary tools they need to bring their business ideas to fruition, as small businesses are a significant contributor to the Gross Domestic Product of the Federation as well as the wider Caribbean. Necola has a Master's of Business Administration, which she earned from the University of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix. She is also presently employed as a Credit Risk Analyst at the Development Bank of St. Kitts and Nevis.

Tishon Thomas has 14 years of experience in the IT Industry. Tishon is CEO at SKN IT Solutions, a computer repair and IT management company which he cofounded in September 2013 with business partner Winston Martin. The company provides outsourced IT services and project management for businesses. He started his career as an apprentice IT Technician and later became the IT Manager for a Luxury Resort Development Company.

St. Lucia

Eleanor Joseph is the current President of the Vieux Fort North District Youth and Sports Council, a volunteer-based, non-governmental organization. The Council has the mandate to plan, develop, and implement youth-oriented activities and programs. Eleanor recently completed a BSc in Youth Development Work at the University of the West Indies. As a former business administrator and a youth and community worker, she continuously makes efforts to help empower young people like herself. In 2015 she was awarded the Youth of Excellence award.

Celesta "Lesta" Laurencin is the Founder and Chief Operations Officer of Miel, a bee rearing and honey production business in Saint Lucia. Through Miel, Lesta hopes to achieve the following: produce high quality, pure honey; contribute to the re-establishment of the honey bee population; and provide sustainable livelihoods for persons in his community of Anse La Raye. Though largely self-taught in apiculture, Lesta has completed his secondary school education at George Charles Secondary School. In his current capacity, Lesta serves as a PADI certified Dive Instructor at Ti Kaye Resort and Spa. Lesta has also secured a Boat Masters Captain license for coastal waters. Lesta's professional experience has allowed him to gain valuable knowledge of Saint Lucia's marine environment, biodiversity, and environmental issues. With his experience, Lesta is well poised to establish a sustainable and successful apiculture business.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Jamal Browne has participated in the Global Young Leaders Conference in Washington, DC and New York City. He received a BSc. (Hons) in Surveying and Land Information from The University of the West Indies (UWI) St. Augustine, and joined the Lands and Surveys Department of St. Vincent and the Grenadines as a Land Surveyor. He returned to UWI to pursue his M.Phil, with a focus on Land Tenure Security and Disaster Risk Reduction, and successfully upgraded to PhD studies. He joined the UN-HABITAT as a Consultant Project Officer, and soon after launched his own private consultancy, Land and Property Network (LPN). Having recently completed his doctoral studies, he is now firmly set on making significant contributions to the economic and social development of St. Vincent and Grenadines, while inspiring other high-impact individuals to do the same.

Suriname

Cheryl Brunings is the founder and CEO of C-Care. C-Care is a babysitting center in Suriname. It is a small business with the aspirations to grow to a larger company. C-Care is a new concept for Suriname, and both customers and employees positively respond to the initiative. It is C-Care's pleasure to create work for young Surinamese women and also give parents the opportunity to go out or work in the afternoon/evening. Cheryl is still a mechanical engineering student at PTC (Polytechnic College). She is also a semi-professional volleyball player for Suriname.

Rajiv Hieralal is the Managing Director and Founder of APPTASTIC N.V, a software development company focused on developing technological innovations. They have created an interactive digital program for Telesur, a telecommunications provider, which allows anyone to communicate with a surface or screen via touch. They won the Telesur/IT-Core Hackathon v2.0.14. Rajiv has a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering: Information Technology from Anton de Kom University of Suriname.

Moreno Jackson studied Electrical Engineering at the University of Suriname for three years. He currently leads a subsection of an entity which handles the power quality in the country. He wants to launch SurGreenSolutions (SGS), which will be specialized in providing sustainable green solutions. He is studying for his Master's Degree in Innovation and Technology, and he should complete his studies in May 2017. He is also a member of the non-profit organization Junior Chamber International.

Obed Kanape is a lifelong learner who believes in and shares the ideal of "Knowledge is Freedom". This is the ideal by which he started OKE: Opportunity, Knowledge & Empowerment, a social enterprise with the vision to liberate, expand, and empower individuals and groups by providing opportunities to gain knowledge, skills, coaching, leadership, and support. Obed studies Sociology at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname and Professional Coaching at the Academy for Counseling and Coaching in Suriname. He also volunteers at the Foundation Royal Fiiman Paansu. Additionally, he is a Radio Host, Performance Artist, Spiritualist, Public Speaker, Writer, and a certified Youth2Youth Basic Life Skills Facilitator at the Pan-American Development Foundation's KariYu! Program for school dropouts.

Kajal Ashna Mahepal is the Founder and CEO of Foundation Young Help Suriname, which strives to equip Surinamese youth with the tools for success. They also initiate and execute projects for Surinamese youth in support of the Global Sustainable Development Goals. She has served as a Senior Sector Coordinator for the Suriname Government's Ministry of Finance in their Department of Planning and Development Finance. She has a Master's Degree in Social Science from the Erasmus University Netherlands and a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering from Anton de Kom Universiteit van Suriname.

Trinidad and Tobago

Nelicia Adams is the Founder and Director of Caribbean Youth Development Network (CYDN), an NGO focused on the individual and collective development of young people within Trinidad and Tobago. They place an emphasis on the development of emotional intelligence and teamwork through theatre arts, dance, and sporting initiatives. Nelicia is a human resources professional with extensive experience in management, corporate training, and organizational development. Prior to focusing her creative energies on CYDN, she was employed as a Program Coordinator at the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs where she was instrumental in the implementation of the first National Youth Policy. Nelicia has an MBA and a Bachelor's in Psychology from the University of the West Indies.

Brian Benoit has been playing steel pan, a musical instrument, for the past 15 years. The Benoit Academy of Steel Pan is an arts education, multimedia, and entertainment company that educates students to achieve excellence in the study of steel pan. He won the National Youth Award for Entrepreneurship in 2015 and the BPTT award for most outstanding student in the pan making and tuning course conducted by Pan Development Unlimited in 2009. He also won the Ideas to Innovation Award (i2i) under the Ministry of Planning for recognition of his commitment to shaping the future of Trinidad and Tobago and developing the education sector of the steel pan industry.

Jennel Fraser is one of the Directors of College Mania Tv Ltd. along with Kerron Brown. College Mania Tv Ltd. started in 2011, and the aim of company is to develop a regional brand that is relatable to students as well as young adults, highlighting and showcasing their views on pertinent issues. College Mania Tv has successfully produced two seasons, and Jennel is currently producing the third season of the television series. In January 2016 the company launched an anti-bullying initiative created to develop a forum for young people to be able to speak out against bullying and suggest solutions for crime, violence, abuse, bullying, and racial discrimination. Jennel Fraser is seeking a degree in Behavioral Science at the University of the Southern Caribbean.

Deidre Cristal Lee Kin is the Co- Founder and COO of Dingole Ltd. Dingole's flagship project is Trinipedia, the first mobile Augmented Reality (AR) platform in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean. Trinipedia uses AR, a cutting-edge technology that allows for a digitally enhanced view of the real world, connecting people with more meaningful content about everyday objects in everyday life. Deidre has eleven years of sales experience. She has a B.A in Marketing Management, an L.L.B in legal studies, and is currently an active member of the Entrepreneurship Community in Trinidad and Tobago.

Alpha Sennon is the Founder and Executive Director of Whyfarm, an NGO geared towards creating innovative approaches to attract young people to agricultural jobs. He served on the executive board of the Agribusiness Society of the University of the West Indies as the Research and Student Development Officer and later as the President. He is pursuing a Master in Philosophy in Agricultural Extension at the University of the West Indies.

Uruguay

Natalia Díaz Kopec is the Founder and CEO of La Casa del Hornero which will be the first sustainable bed and breakfast and multipurpose center in Uruguay. She previously worked at IBM in Montevideo and performed tasks related to payment and fraud detection. Natalia studied Tourism at ORT University and Business Administration at UDELAR.

Sofia Gruss is the CEO and Co-Founder of CAPITA, a company dedicated to the design and manufacture of high-end leather boots and shoes for men. She previously worked as a fashion stylist and producer for CALA. She participated in the Más Emprendedoras program in 2016, which was sponsored by Endeavor and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Sofia has a degree in Fashion Design from the Universidad ORT Uruguay.

Marjorie Spitalnik is the CEO and Founder of Tedybujo, a company that transforms kids' drawings into plush toys. She started the company with her husband in 2013 and has a degree in Communications. Over the last three years, they have been working with cancer patients and are supported by local organizations. She was nominated in 2016 to be the Young Woman Entrepreneur of the Year for Uruguay.

Agustina Tierno is the founder of Bio-Observatories, an office specialized in infrastructure projects for areas of great natural interest intended for bio-ecological research, conscious sightseeing, and interpretative ecotourism. The company offers innovative solutions with a focus on sustainability. She is a professor at the Faculty of Architecture, Design, and Urbanism at the Universidad de la República. Previously she worked as a Project Manager at Carlos Arcos Arquite(c)tura, a Uruguayan-Brazilian architecture firm responsible for the design and construction of multievent buildings such as the Curitiba´s Stadium for the 2014 Brasil FIFA World Cup. She studied architecture at the Faculty of Architecture, Design, and Urbanism at the Universidad de la República.

Marcelo Wilkorwsky is the CEO and Co-Founder of Oincs, a mobile crowdsourcing platform that helps citizens move safely throughout their cities by sharing real-time information such as crimes, robberies, and traffic, thus enabling them to achieve a better city life experience. His startup became the most frequently downloaded app in Uruguay and reached the top 3 in 11 countries across Latin America. Oincs has received numerous international awards such as IDB Startup with Highest Growth Potential & Most Innovative Concept, IBM SmartCamp Competition Winner, Red Innova Challenge 2016 Winner, and World Bank and Wharton School Ideas for Action Winner. Marcelo holds a Bachelor's Degree in International Trading (Magna Cum Laude) from the Universidad de la Empresa (Uruguay), an MBA from Universitat de Barcelona, a Master's in Digital Marketing from Esden Business School, and a Master's in Finance from IEBS Business School.

Venezuela

John Paul Arvelo is the President of Servicios de Seguridad y Resguardo, which provides security services and guarantees the protection of their clients and property. He previously served as legal counsel for Fundacion Ninos Wayuu, which designs and develops programs to provide social and legal assistance. He has a Master's Degree from the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the Universidad del Zulia.

Jonathan Castro is a Venezuelan biologist at Simon Bolivar University and Founder and Growth Hacker of La Cuadra Universitaria. Additionally, Jonathan is a social network researcher and Enterprise Learning Facilitator. He belongs to the Venezuelan American Friendship Association and focuses on the association of new technologies and social networks with scientific theories. Jonathan is also interested in neuro-marketing as an emerging area of study.

Soriyer Ciliberto is the Founder and CEO of Chic Elastic, a company dedicated to creating and designing personalized handmade accessories using elastic material. Chic Elastic offers to the market new and innovative ways to wear elastic. Prior to launching Chic Elastic, Soriyer worked for nine years at 3M Manufacturera Venezuela leading several positions in departments such as regulatory affairs, marketing and sales, and logistics. Soriyer holds a Master's Degree in Sales and Marketing and a Bachelor´s Degree in Industrial Engineering from the Universidad de Carabobo Venezuela.

Maria Córdova is the Co-Founder and General Director of ROA, a social start-up that encourages high academic performance through a program conducted in high schools. It also provides academic tools and scholarship information to students and young Venezuelan professionals. It is an innovative job bank and promotes social work through a web platform. Maria is studying Economics at Romulo Gallegos University, is President of the Economic Development Club at her school, and is a Delegate in the Economic Students National Council.

Gerardo Di Trolio is the founder of Grupo Di Trolio C.A. a company specializing in the production of re-closable zipper bags. In 2013, Gerardo founded his organization to provide high-quality packaging products, boost the local economy, and bring social benefits to the Venezuelan community. Gerardo trains his employees and economically supports them to further their education. He created a child sponsorship program that provides the employees' children with uniforms and books to help reduce school absences. Gerardo holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Simón Bolívar University in Venezuela and a Master’s Degree in Oil and Gas and Engineering from China University of Geosciences in China.

Nikolai Elneser is an Urban Planner from the Universidad Simón Bolívar in Caracas, Venezuela. Currently, he works at Caracas Mi Convive, an NGO dedicated to promoting networks between community leaders and social organizations to prevent violence in informal settlements. They currently work in more than 25 communities of Caracas, carrying out violence prevention workshops, identifying hotspots, and planning community-driven activities to prevent violence.

Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative

Participant Biographies

Héctor González Hernandez is currently studying sociology and is very passionate about working with local communities. He is currently the Co-Founder and Director of an NGO called Deporte para el Desarrollo, a local project in Venezuela which uses sports to boost healthy development for children and teenagers. He wants sports to be a tool that generates social development in his country.

Daniel Knobelsdorf is the Co-Founder and Chief Opportunities Officer of The Hunting Party, an organization designed to experiment with co-growth networks. The idea sparked from his experiences in the Venezuelan startup ecosystem, where he wanted to maximize the entrepreneurial efficiency. He currently advises the Permanent Committee of Science, Technology, and Innovation of the Venezuelan Parliament regarding pro-entrepreneurship policy development. Daniel is a partner at Chasqui Mobile, a VoIP startup with the vision of being the main connection between Latin American and Caribbean migrants with their home countries. He serves on the local boards of The Bastiat Society, World Merit and JCI Caracas.

Sandra Méndez Santana is a Human Resources Consultant with a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Relations from the Universidad Catolica Andres Bello. She has more than 14 years of professional experience in Human Resources processes. In 2012, she decided to found www.profesionalesaqui.com as a directory and professional community where freelancers and business owners could promote their work and receive support to help their ventures grow. Today, their mission is to supply their users, freelance professionals, and entrepreneurs with an online networking platform to advertise their services.

Paola Prieto is the CEO and Founder of Enterprising Youth, a company aimed at empowering entrepreneurial ventures of young adults by providing key knowledge about founding and developing a successful company through courses and conferences. The company also serves as a bridge to unite those companies with potential investors. Paola has a Law Degree from the Universidad Rafael Urdaneta in Maracaibo, Venezuela.

Josymar Rodriguez is the Director and Co-Founder of Incursiones, a social initiative and architecture studio based in Caracas, Venezuela. In 2014, Incursiones was created to promote interactions between the city and its inhabitants. The initiative aims to reveal new ways to approach the design of public space and how people think about their cities. Before Incursiones, Josymar worked in private architecture firms and art platforms and received several awards for architectural competitions. She has a professional degree in Architecture from the Universidad Simon Bolivar. She also has a Diploma in Design and Social Innovation from Prodiseño and Universidad Católica Andres Bello.

Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative

Participant Biographies

Abraham Sanchez is the CEO of Quantum Computer Electronics, a company offering IT services, software development, and e-commerce solutions. He previously worked at the MundoMac Store in Caracas, Venezuela. He is pursuing a degree in Computer Science from the Central University of Venezuela.

Luis Santiago is the General Manager of SKAT Sistemas, a Venezuelan startup that provides technological solutions to handle medical and administrative information. A self-taught programmer and project manager, Luis mainly coordinates new product development, technical support, and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) for SKAT. He is leading the development of their new multi-platform software, SKAT MED, which aims to integrate patients' health records both in private and public sectors on the same application. Luis is a social communications graduate and professor at the Universidad Central de Venezuela, focusing his teaching and research on discourse analysis, marketing, and advertising.

Jennifer Schell is the CEO and Founder of TrabajaMama.com, an online platform that seeks the comfortable insertion of professional mothers in the workplace. Jennifer is a high school teacher and mentors children on issues related to diplomacy, leadership, and international relations. She also previously worked as an analyst at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Venezuela. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Fermin Toro.

Miguel Yi is the Co-Founder and Product Manager of Helud, a health social network that aims to empower patients to make smarter choices about their own health by enabling the collaboration and sharing of healthcare information between all members of the health ecosystem. In 2009, he identified an opportunity to significantly simplify healthcare professionals' daily tasks by using automation and co-founded MedicalPro; this project was a finalist in the 2011 Venezuelan Wayra cohort. In 2016, Miguel and his partners developed a new business idea based on big data analytics and founded Helud. Miguel holds an Electric Engineering degree from the Universidad Simón Bolívar and an MBA from the Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración (IESA) in Venezuela.