



The Newsletter of the Asian Rural Institute

Take My Hand

ARI Welcomes the Class of 2010

29 Rural Leaders from 16 Countries. This is the class of 2010. From Kiribati to Kenya they have all made it to ARI and are ready to spend the next nine months living, working, learning, and sharing together in this community of self sufficiency. They have come to challenge themselves, to better themselves, and to build their strength all so that they may better serve their people back home. Please take a moment to read more about each of them in the enclosed Photo Roster.

Honoring ARI Graduates



This special issue of Take My Hand was prepared to honor our graduates. It is their work that gives meaning to ARI, and they are working indeed. Enclosed are just a few of their stories – samples taken from around the world. For each story you read here, imagine a dozen or more other graduates working in equally creative and inspiring ways. And for each graduate imagine a hundred, two hundred, or even a thousand farmers being trained to produce healthy food in a sustainable way that will provide for their families and communities. Imagine twenty women's self help groups being formed – bringing independence, financial security, and empowerment to poor rural families. Imagine indigenous

peoples around the world finding their voice and advancing legislation that returns them their land and rights as a people. For these are the kinds of actions our graduates are taking, and the impact they have is exponential.

As I was reading through the emails and reports we receive regularly from graduates, I found myself looking for numbers. "A thousand farmers trained." "A micro-credit and savings scheme for 3,000 rural women." Yet, I also couldn't help thinking about *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. In that story the little prince explained how much adults loved figures, always asking questions like "How old is he? How many brothers has he? How much money does his father make?" And from these figures we determine value. Numbers are, of course, important for the concrete results they represent, and many have been included in these updates. But we must also remember to recognize that the real value does not lie in the numbers alone, but in the graduates and their determination and dedication to work tirelessly (and even when they are tired) as leaders for the rural people.

If you would like more of the photo rosters or graduate updates or would like to receive this information in .pdf format please contact Steven Cutting at ecu@ari-edu.org

How to donate to ARI

- ① online through AFARI at <http://friends-ari.org/>
- ② by check

American citizens living anywhere in the world may make tax deductible gifts to ARI through AFARI.

Make out your check to **American Friends of ARI** and send it to:

American Friends of ARI (AFARI)
c/o Steve Gerdes - Treasurer
11920 Burt St., Suite 145
Omaha, NE 68154-1598

News & Announcements

ARI Farm Shop

*Construction to begin this fall!
\$150,000 still to raise!*

While self sufficiency in sustainable food production is a central focus of ARI, the farm shop is the center of the farm and all agricultural activities. It is a point of meeting, planning and preparation. It is a place of practical learning and practical application. ARI stores its rice, wheat, vegetables, and tools in this facility, and it is here that participants and staff prepare and store our high nutrient 'bokashi' compost. On harvest day, vegetables are brought to the farm shop for cleaning and sorting on their way to the kitchen and finally, the tables of the dining hall.

If you have been to ARI and taken part in our farm work (which we are not shy about asking folks to do), you will undoubtedly have made use of the farm shop. And in so doing you will have seen that it is on far beyond its last legs. Constructed in 1973 of donated prefab materials, its floor is now weak, windows and wall panels are sagging and becoming displaced, and most disturbingly,



Harvest day

Come and Visit ARI

Join the AFARI trip, October 1-13, 2010

Have you been thinking about a trip to ARI but the time was never right? Well, don't put it off any longer. AFARI has organized a great trip. While some of the details have yet to be arranged, the basics are in place. The dates coincide with ARI's annual Harvest Thanksgiving Celebration. Tour members will be invited to take part in preparation, working side by side with participants as well as enjoying the festivities themselves. Educational sessions led by ARI staff are scheduled for learning about various aspects of the program such as food production and the impact of the training on graduates. The weather in Japan is great in October with crisp nights and warm days. Two day trips will be arranged to nearby attractions such as the temple at Nikko or the "pottery village" of Mashiko. The price is \$1490 inclusive of food, lodging and transportation within Japan. At the conclusion you may return home or stay on and travel Japan on your own. If this is the trip you have been waiting for, don't hesitate to contact J.B. Hoover for more details. jb@ileap.org or (206) 349-2807

the base of the metal framework is rusting. For the sake of safety and continued operation of the training program, the ARI board determined that the facility must be replaced. The idea is to construct an eco-conscious building that will cater to the needs of ARI while utilizing renewable energy sources, such as passive solar technology for heating and photovoltaic panels for electricity. The plan is to begin construction in November of this year and complete it before the 2011 training program in March.

The cost is \$500,000 and thanks to the generous contributions of churches, friends, and businesses both in Japan and North America, we have collected a good chunk of that. But we still have about \$150,000 to go. If you would like to contribute to this campaign (in addition to your regular contribution – we still have to keep this place running!!), please send a check to AFARI noted "Farm Shop." I know this is a cliché but really every \$20, \$50, or \$100 brings us that much closer to our goal.

For more information please be in touch with J.B. Hoover jb@ileap.org / 206-523-5327 or Steven Cutting ecu@ari-edu.org



Farm Shop - 37 years old and counting

Frequent Flier Mile Donations Add Up!

In 2009 AFARI received enough Frequent Flier Mile donations to cover the flights of FIVE 2010 participants – from Nepal, Myanmar, India and two from the Philippines. Thanks to you and AFARI President Pam Hasegawa who suffered some sleepless nights to arrange the flights, this added up to \$7000 that ARI would have had to spend on those tickets. AFARI was also able to use donated miles to cover flights of ARI and AFARI staff, totaling \$2100 that went to ARI instead of the airlines. Don't let your miles expire. Donate them to AFARI instead. For more info contact J.B. Hoover: jb@ileap.org or (206) 349-2807



Butog from the Philippines