



## Mona Foundation Announces the Launch of Three Giving Circles:

The Mona Foundation is pleased to announce that beginning in January 2016, the Foundation will be launching three giving circles. These giving circles will bring together small groups of highly committed supporters to build a strong community committed to learning about development and philanthropy, our projects and the regions that we support, and help shape plans to enable the Foundation to reach its goals for each region. Based on lessons learned from these three circles the Foundation will launch giving circles in other regions in the coming years.

### 2016 Giving circles:

- **Girls Empowerment, India-** Be part of a team that supports projects in India dedicated to the empowerment of girls, assisting them to transform their own lives and to become agents of change in their communities. Barli Development Institute and Digital Study Hall improve the quality of education for rural and tribal girls of the lowest castes, equip them with skills to navigate the dangers to girls in their society and to demonstrate their abilities to become forces for social transformation.
- **Haiti's Future, Haiti-** Haiti is the poorest country in our hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world. Yet, there is amazing resilience and hope in its people, especially for the education of their children. Join a circle of like-minded people who want to support quality education for these kids in educational projects serving the poorest of Haiti's children – New Horizon School, Cabaret, Anis Zunuzi School, Port-au-Prince and Georges Marcellus School in rural Guerot. These kids are Haiti's future and access to quality education will help them be among those to lead their country to a better future.
- **NGen Giving Circle-** Donors between ages of 15-25 are invited and encouraged to take leadership in learning more about philanthropy and to build the future of Mona Foundation by starting Giving Circles on their college and high school campuses. Members of this Giving Circle will receive guidance from the staff and board of Mona on how to give, how to recruit other members and will have multiple opportunities for building their leadership skills.

### What is a giving circle?

In 2016, Mona Foundation will invite existing supporters who have already demonstrated a significant commitment to projects in India and Haiti, financial or otherwise, to serve as the founding members of these giving circles. A Giving Circle is a group of individuals who come together, pool their resources, learn about and help solve one issue that we all deeply care about: providing education to children everywhere. Mona Giving Circle members have passion for the mission of Mona and believe that education can and does change everything in the life of a child, a family, a

community. Mona's giving circle network is a community and an unprecedented opportunity for philanthropists to learn from each other and multiply their impact. Giving Circle members are unique because they will have a hands-on approach to their philanthropy. Our giving circle members are change makers. They know that it may take years, possibly their entire lifetimes, to create change on the scale that they envision, so they're in it for the long haul. They believe in the power of thinking and learning as a community and look forward to researching, discussing and investing as a team.

## Why Giving Circles?

- Because understanding social and economic development and their application to Mona Foundations' work after 17 years is incredibly complex and valuable and fun when done with other like-minded supporters.
- Because giving circles are able to fund not just one program or school once, but groups of organizations year after year.
- Because giving circle members can leverage their individual gifts to award large, high-impact grants to deserving organizations.
- Because working in a community of donors is more empowering than working alone.

## Benefits of Joining a Giving Circle

- Learn about the field of social and economic development, learn from the staff and board of Mona and the lessons learned over the 17 years of service, and understand the values and principles of Mona Foundation and their application in partnering with organizations globally.
- Be part of a small team of nationally and internationally like-minded individuals who learn and give together.
- Join a site visit to the programs in the region and extend an invitation to other friends to join
- Expand your leadership skills as part of the strategy team

## The details

1) **Connecting.** Each giving circle will hold regular meetings or other social events to build a sense of community among supporters who share a common passion for learning about the model and values of Mona Foundation and the Foundation's projects in either India or Haiti. These meetings will provide an opportunity for participants to learn more about social and economic development, Mona Foundation's theory of change and process of partnership with effective organizations globally. We will also learn about each project, and their goals for the organization and the region. The members of each giving circle will decide collectively where and how often to meet. Ideally, each group will meet at least quarterly.

2) **Learning.** With staff support, each giving circle will host several visits (through phone or Skype or other methods) per year. During 2016 (the first year of this program) we will learn from the staff and board of Mona Foundation about the formation of the values and principles in place that have helped shape the organization, share readings and materials that are cutting edge in the fields of

development and philanthropy, and discuss the theory of change for Mona Foundation. Other goals are to learn about the programs in the region with updates on their progress toward their goals, and opportunities to ask questions from the leaders of organizations we support.

3) **Travel.** With staff support, giving circles will be encouraged to plan visits to the programs in their respective regions. These visits would provide opportunities for participants to engage in hands-on service activities. They would also enable participants to see for themselves the work that these programs are doing and learn more about the contexts in which the programs operate. Participants would then return and present their learnings to the board. They would also commit to sharing their learning by hosting gatherings with existing and prospective supporters to share their experiences, so that these supporters as well, may develop a deeper, more personal connection to the programs visited. The cost of these site visits would be covered by the members of Giving Circles.

4) **Commitment to growing the Giving Circle.** Giving Circles will partner with staff and board and share the responsibility for driving the progress of the Foundation toward meeting its fundraising commitments to each of the target projects. The role of the giving circle will be to share lessons learned from individual fundraising, continue strategies that have worked in the past, generate new ideas, and lead the efforts of the Foundation to meet its commitments to each of the target projects.

5) **Leadership:** Each Giving Circle will have 4-6 leaders who will work with staff to organize the logistics, figure out details of the program, develop plans for outreach to current Mona supporters and plans for reaching new supporters. The leaders will also work closely with Mona Board members. The Giving Circle leaders will be committed to investing time in organizing the group and as well as a significant personal gift towards meeting the goal.

6) **Reports to Board and helps develop the vision for future.** In partnership with staff responsible, each giving circle will bring together and analyze, on an ongoing basis, the information necessary to enable the Foundation to track the impact of its support for the project. The leaders of each giving circle may also work with the directors of each program in their region to understand (and report back to the Board) the growth strategy of the program, provide support where requested/needed to develop such plans, and develop recommendations for the Board as to how the Foundation can best support the multi-year goals of the program.

**Do you want to join a giving circle?**

For more information, please contact Bookda Gheisar at [bookda@monafoundation.org](mailto:bookda@monafoundation.org).

**We're looking forward to hearing from you!**