

In This Issue

- Artisans work with experts
- Lima Artisan Week
- Kids for La Oroya
- Doe Run Still NOT Open
- CAMBIALO
- YAV Spotlight: *Alissa King*

Web Sites

- <http://manosperu.org/>
- <http://fairtradeperu.com>
- <http://kuzka.podbean.com>
- facebook

Sights, Studies, Smiles and a unified future

Utsarga Bhattarai - Colorado College

Jovana's mom runs a corner grocery store - a little bigger than the closet in my dorm room. Her dad works for a refinery that extracts lead from mineral ores to be used in car batteries globally. Owned by a wealthy New Yorker, this refinery hasn't been complying with any of the local environmental standards and putting out life-threatening levels of lead into the

environment. A cheerful twelve-year-old, Jovana greets us every morning with a contagious grin, displaying her teeth that are well past due a dental check-up. She attends a local public school and volunteers her time at the network of local youths that partakes in environmental-education projects.

Her dad's job at the refinery is Jovana's family's main source of income. She doesn't want the refinery to go away - after all, the lead in the air is much difficult to notice than the lack of food on her plate. She only wishes that the refinery take a few measures to reduce the contamination of her town.

Prior to leaving for Peru, I was more or less unaware of what we'd be doing there: my guess was we'd be working alongside a local NGO, probably picking up trash or planting saplings. In less than a week, I had acquainted myself with almost every convolution surrounding the contamination issue of La Oroya. I had been inspired by the courage and determination of local youths such as Jovana and other NGO volunteers as they strive for equality and justice amid multitudes of obstructions. I had seen what other alternative employment opportunities the locals were exploring so that working in the refinery would no longer be the only option. While I had not participated in any active service work during my stay there, I operated under 'solidarity with accompaniment.' By accompanying the NGO and the locals for six days, we had shown them that there are people around the world who sympathize with them and are willing to work with them to resolve the issue. While our service work in Peru may

not have had immediate impacts that can be gauged, it was just the foundation for a greater project which only began once we got back. Our task now, through advocacy and presentations, is to highlight the issue of La Oroya and push the responsible authorities to take actions so that Jovana doesn't have to pay the price every time I drive to go skiing.



Photo: Joseph Tobiason
Taking Samples: students from La Oroya take dirt samples with students from Colorado College to measure lead levels

Lima Celebrates Artisan Week

Ginna Irby - YAV

From March 10 to the 28, Lima celebrated Peruvian Artisans Week. Artisan groups from throughout the country and supporting organizations like Bridge of Hope gathered in Lima to recognize the hard work and craftsmanship of the artisans of Peru and to celebrate the role that they and their work play in documenting, preserving, and sharing the many unique cultures found in Peru. Masses were held in the mornings, followed by a series of workshops and seminars open to the general public. Each day was marked by at least one traditional folk dance presentation and an ongoing fair in the center of Lima displaying and selling the artisans' products. Bridge of Hope had a booth staffed by artisans and displaying a variety of products from many of our groups.

During this closing ceremony, Bridge of Hope was honored to be recognized by the District of Miraflores as a dedicated institution promoting the work of Peruvian artisans and fair trade. They receive this honor with much gratitude to the artisans with whom we are fortunate to work and to our clients who purchase in solidarity. Bridge of Hope continues to strive to be just that - a bridge between artisans of quality and excellence and socially conscious consumers. Trade is more than just an exchange of goods but an exchange of talents, gifts, and cultures. We continue with our work in fair trade in the hope of creating a world of justice and solidarity, crafted by the hands of our program's artisans.



Photo: David Lozano

Awarded: Members of Bridge of Hope pose with their medal for the Fair Trade store

Artisans develop with experts

Gail Nichols - Artisan from the USA

I had always had Peru on my "bucket" list of places to go mainly because of the obvious draw of Machu Picchu. Little did I know that the opportunity would present itself in another way. I have to say that being asked to go to Lima as part of a mentor program through Partners for Just Trade in connection with Bridge of Hope, was quite an opportunity.

The three groups that I worked with consisted of 2 to 5 artisans per group, skilled in their craft as seamstresses and possessing many of the skills that are needed to move forward in the tasks that were set before them, mainly to understand the process of product design and development from start to finish and to be able to execute that process independently.

We had a lot of material to cram into a very short amount of time. We discussed new and old products, how to make them better for an ever expanding market, how to

form collections, how to use color, how to form new ideas. From the results of the groups' final projects, I feel that we made great progress meeting our goals!

Logistics proved something of a hurdle, coming and going each day for over an hour by way of bus, moto and taxis. But I found good use of the time in that I was able to have down time with my translators, to talk about what was going to happen that day, what did happen at the end of each day or just getting to know one another better. It was also an opportunity to see the areas I was traveling and get an idea of my whereabouts.

Tired at the end of the day but thankful for being given the opportunity to pass on some of the knowledge that has been passed on to me over the years by studying or by someone giving me a door to that knowledge, was very rewarding.

The chance to meet new people, establish new relationships, have a cultural exchange and learn about the world outside my own was a challenge well worth it!

Thanks to PJT and B of H for making it possible, to my translators, and to the artisans who welcomed me into their workrooms and their lives, thank you so much for enriching my life beyond what you know!!! Hasta pronto!!!

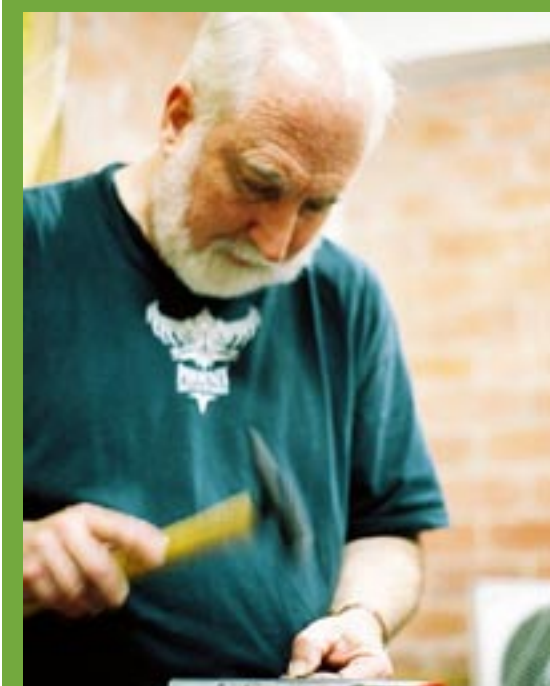


Photo: Joseph Tobiason

Forging: an artisan through Partners for Just Trade gives a demonstration to local jeweler artisans in a workshop in Lima

How long until Doe Run re-opens its plant in LO?

Conrado Oliveroa - Director Red Uniendo Manos

What will be the destiny of the paralyzed metallurgical industry in La Oroya?

The Doe Run Company has again changed its agreement to restart operations of the metallurgical plant in La Oroya. In this opportunity, it proposed to follow postponing one more time the start-up of operations until the end of the established term regulated by law number 29410. However, in agreement with the information from OSINERGMIN (the State's Watchdog Organism), the company will not have satisfied the agreements that needed to be achieved by the end of the period.

After the last three postponements signed with the labor authorities and their failure to be completed, we

continue to question: What is the security that the public and the workers have about the date of their return to work and the social dynamics imposed by the metallurgical operations in La Oroya? Has the business achieved the necessary base agreements to guarantee the functioning of operations and the projection of that maintenance over the medium and long term? Is the state incapable of demanding the restart of productive activities in the Doe Run plant? Are they waiting for the completion of postponed deadlines?

During the last year, the Joining Hands Network of Peru has come to publicly solicit that the state takes new strategies and viable alternatives to change the operators of the metallurgical plant. We hope that this will lead to a long-term solution that benefits the general health of the population.



Photo: Joseph Tobiason
Still closed: The Doe Run Smelter in La Oroya remains closed, when will it open up again?

CAMBIALO NOW

Jed Koball - PCUSA Facilitator

A name is so much more than just a name. It's an identity. The kids from La Oroya are establishing themselves as a formidable force to create change in one of the most contaminated cities in the world. In fact, their name says it all... CAMBIALO! Translated into English, means "CHANGE IT"!

CAMBIALO (meaning "Construyendo un Ambiente Adecuado en La Oroya" -- Building a Better Environment in La Oroya), is the acronym for the name chosen by the group of 12 kids (ages 8-12) who are creating an international kids' movement to call attention to the serious issue of contamination.

The focus of their movement is of course the contamination of La Oroya due to the lead smelter, Doe Run (a subsidiary of New York based Renco Group), that has left 97% of the kids in La Oroya with extremely high levels of lead in their blood. Their strategy is to use the disciplines of Science, Art, and Technology in a positive way to educate and empower other kids around the world in order to call attention to this severe issue.

We have established a relationship with EcoTech School (an after school program at P.S. 58 in Brooklyn NY), via bi-weekly skype conversations, blogs, and a newly developed email pen-pal relationship between the kids, they are reaching out to media sources and political leaders. In fact, because of

this partnership, the EcoTech School won the "Above and Beyond" award from ABC television in New York. And, on June 26 a skype call between CAMBIALO and EcoTech School will be broadcast on primetime television in the New York metropolitan area, bringing more attention to La Oroya. Stay tuned for weblinks to the half hour TV program!

But this is only the beginning. Over the next two months, CAMBIALO will be developing its website and creating lesson plans for public schools and faith based groups in order to educate and empower other kids to participate in this movement. In fact, if you know of a school or church that would be interested in organizing a group of kids to be a part of the movement, please contact [Jed Koball](#).

Also, stay tuned to updates of CAMBIALO's activities in the months to come, including: their participation in ongoing scientific studies in La Oroya to measure and prove the levels of contamination; their conducting radio interviews with political candidates about issues of the environment; their developing filmmaking skills and storytelling skills as they work towards a feature length documentary about their movement; and much more!

CAMBIALO is much more than just a name. And, it's much more your typical afterschool program. CAMBIALO is an attitude... a culture... a movement. CAMBIALO is the future for how the world can work together to eradicate the world's worst injustices. And you too, young at age and young at heart can join the cause!



Photo: Joseph Tobiason

Filming: Aldair, a kid from La Oroya, films the Earth Day Fair held there

Texas to Huanta: YAV Alissa King

Name: Alissa Diane King **Age:** 22
Degree: BA Psychology

School: Austin College
YAV Placement: Radio Cultural Amauta Huanta, Peru

Favorite part about Peru: The friendly inviting people I have met and the view of the mountains that I have here.

Cultural confusion: For the first half of my YAV year, when I returned home for lunch, my host mom would always ask me what I had been doing,

using the word "chambeando." "No, I haven't been chatting. I have been reading the history of Ayacucho or translating something." Sometimes I would sheepishly grin and say "yeah, I checked my email and one of the other YAVs was on and we chatted for a bit."

This conversation happened several times and I started getting frustrated. Why do people always assume that I have been chatting on the internet? I finally asked "chambeando means chatting right?" "No, it is a slang term for working." After 7 months in Peru and I was getting frustrated about people's casual interest in my job because I thought they were continually asking me if I was chatting online.

Alissa King - YAV

My role at Radio AMAUTA has varied from picture taker to document translator to radio preacher. One of the things that I have learned is that often you end up helping in the ways you least expect or you end up being helped more than anything you could give in return. I went to this village called Moya, Tambo. They were putting the roof on their church and people from other villages had come miles on foot to help. I have never seen people work so happily together. I did not hear one grumble or complaint. I helped carry dirt, get vegetables ready to cook, and keep the kids busy. There is nothing like singing silly songs and helping a joyful group of people do what needs to be done.

I also preached a short sermon. This was one of the first sermons I preached in Spanish and I worked on it for a long time. I even had it corrected by my boss. It was very short and I am sure that my delivery of it left something to be desired. Still

I was accepted.

We ended up staying the night. I was a little bothered at first because I was never really told that that was a possibility. Then I looked around at all the people so happy in their work. How could I be upset? In that moment I realized this is what it is all about. I felt loud and clear that I was supposed to be there and that I am supposed to prepare myself to do more in the future. I don't know if God is calling me to mission like what I am doing now, or something else. Either way I feel I am being called to learn all I can and prepare for my future. The people of Moya Tambo reminded me that being happy in doing what needs to be done is incredibly important. They welcomed me with open arms, made me the Madrina of their church, and most importantly helped me once again to see God's presence in the world.



Photo: Joseph Tobiason

Alissa & host sister Pricila

Earth Day Fair shines clean

Joe Tobiason - YAV

For 40 years now, Earth Day has been celebrated all around the world to commemorate the different ways that we as humans interact and can hurt or help our planet. This year I got to see how that was celebrated in San Juan de Lurigancho, the largest district of Lima.

San Juan de Lurigancho is a very dusty place. There is very little water and many dusty roads, so I was very surprised to walk around the corner and find green and white cloth surrounding the futbolito court (basketball court, but with soccer goals). Inside it was completely different.

The organizers, from the NGO CENCA, had filled the square with tables of artisans, property rights booths, food from local cafeterias and a sense of global health.

Over the course of the day, I shared with many people the ecological sanitation systems that CENCA promotes while local school children performed folkloric dances from all through the country. Local communities also performed skits that emphasized the importance of unifying to promote the rights that they have as citizens and the day ended with local rock bands showing their skills. The best were awarded "the best of the zone" and went home with smiles on their faces.

When the sun set and the tables began to be torn down, it was very apparent that though this day had not changed the world and was far from being a true answer to the grave environmental problems that plague this world, something had happened that day which hopefully will lead to a cleaner future for everyone.



Photo: Joseph Tobiason

Dancing: A boy from a local high school dances at the Earth Day Fair in San Juan de Lurigancho