

Indigenously heritage

Passed to Present



Newsletter

August 2011

Vol. 1, Issue 1

InHerit receives Lush Charity Pot Grant to expand participatory heritage mapping in Guatemala

This July, InHerit was honored to receive a grant from LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics for the continuation and expansion of our Participatory Heritage Mapping program in Guatemala. In collaboration with partners the Riecken Foundation, four new Maya communities will join San Juan la Laguna and Xolsacmalja in identifying places of cultural value – including sacred and archaeological sites – they wish to protect for future generations. In addition to providing community members with training in GPS and computer technology, the mapping project will give children, youth, adults and elders the opportunity to record the local histories, legends, and traditions associated with heritage places. By the end of 2012, each participating community will have a dynamic map that can be shared with municipal and national authorities, such as the Institute of Anthropology and History (IDAEH), to create a permanent record of territorial boundaries and cultural sites. The four new communities – Cabricán and Huitán (Mam Mayan) and Chiché and San Carlos Sija (K'iche' Mayan) will join the Participatory Heritage Mapping program in January 2012.

Maya Project still going strong five years later

When we sat down with Carin Steen, the director of Arte Acción Copán Ruinas (AACR), in 2007 to develop a series of children's workshops promoting Ch'orti' Mayan identity and heritage, little did we know that the program would be our longest running and most beloved effort. Today, although the doors of AACR have closed, the Maya Project continues to reach hundreds of students under the direction of former staff, Marlen Vasquez and Elsa Morales.



Look for the specially marked InHerit LUSH Charity Pot – a rich, fair trade, organic hand and body lotion made with cocoa butter, almond oil, and scents of geranium and ylang ylang – debuting this fall. Keep an eye on InHerit's new Facebook page for the release date. For more information on LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics, visit www.lush.com.



Ostuman, Honduras, July 27, 2011

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Manejo Cultural working to improve reef conservation with television show

Manejo Cultural, located in Puerto Morelos, Mexico, is deeply concerned with the state of the Caribbean reef that lies just meters from its shore. Using funding provided by InHerit, the organization, along with local university students, are producing a television series that brings experts together to discuss the fragility of the reef and its connection to the cultural and ecological heritage of the region. The first half of the series has been filmed and is undergoing editing. The series will be accompanied by short documentaries of around five minutes each. Manejo Cultural hopes to not only play these programs on local television but distribute copies to households around Puerto Morelos and neighboring communities, focusing on reaching female household members.



View of the Caribbean Sea from Puerto Morelos, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

Ch'orti' youth learn to excavate in certificate program

Like our predecessor, MACHI, one of InHerit's objectives is training indigenous people to investigate and manage places of their ancestral heritage. Following a number of strikes (some violent) at the World Heritage Site of Copán in Honduras, the government eventually released a portion of the profits from park entrance fees to a local Ch'orti' Maya cultural and political group, CONIMCHH. Still, there are few Ch'orti' people involved with the investigation and management of the site beyond basic labor. InHerit's Archaeology Certificate program is working to change this by instructing youth technical and managerial skills. The program, to be certified by the Institute of National Anthropology and History nicely complements a new track in archaeology at the National Autonomous University of Honduras.



Students with archaeologist Kristen Landau in their "excavation unit" in San Rafael, Honduras on July 26.

Riecken Foundation presents community legends at FILGUA

InHerit was present at the FILGUA book fair in Guatemala City on July 22 to witness the official debut of six new bilingual books. Each book presents a legend from six Mayan communities in the Guatemalan highlands and is illustrated by local artists. Representatives in attendance accepted their books on behalf of their community in front of an audience of fifty. Collectively, these books are the first in Guatemala to provide bilingual translations of local stories. They will be distributed within their community of origin and for sale via the Riecken Foundation. Visit www.riecken.org or contact InHerit for more information.

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New Maya heritage museum under construction at Parque A'ak

Parque A'ak located outside the Yucatecan capital city of Mérida was a 2010 recipient of InHerit's Community Heritage Conservation Grant. The park is a center of learning for school groups throughout the region, focusing on traditional technologies, sustainable energy, biological conservation, and Maya culture. Currently under construction is a new cultural museum which will feature three sections of Maya heritage: ancient Maya civilization, post-conquest Maya heritage, and today's Maya culture in daily practice. Parque A'ak is working with architects specializing in green designs to create an eco-friendly museum that minimizes the use of electricity and maximizes the use of natural light and air circulation. The museum is expected to be open to the public in 2012.



Historical objects for the new museum.

ADIPES honors community participants in closing ceremony

Participating students.



Jarana dancers.



On August 3, 2011, InHerit partner ADIPES honored the students and community members that participated in its weekly workshop on Maya culture, literature, and creative writing. ADIPES is a collaboration among young Maya social scientists and literary experts based in Motul de Felipe Carillo Puerto in Yucatán, Mexico. Over fifty community members attended the closing ceremony at which twelve students ages 8-12 were presented with certificates of completion. Community supporters of the program also received recognition. The ceremony - which was translated in both Spanish and Yucatec Maya - closed with a *jarana* performance, a Yucatecan folk dance. The next phase of the ADIPES project will be the development of two games, "Memory" with medicinal plants and "Snakes and Ladders" with sacred cenotes.

InHerit enriches global diversity from its cultural roots

Visit www.in-herit.org or InHerit on Facebook to learn more or to DONATE to a program.

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