



“Break the Chains” Is Indeed Breaking Chains!

Celebrate what God is doing! Six ministries each received a grant of \$23,307 in September 2008 from contributions received during the first year of American Baptist Women’s Ministries “Break the Chains” national mission project dedicated to ending sex trafficking. Here are summaries of their progress from March 2009 through September 2009:

CALIFORNIA

NightLight USA, Los Angeles, California

Nightlight has continued as an international organization committed to addressing the complex issues surrounding trafficking and prostitution by catalyzing individual and community transformation.

Break the Chains grant funds have been used to pay the salary for Nightlight USA's director Charity Marquis and two additional part-time outreach workers. Funds have also been used for street outreaches, victim identification trainings and a “Hands that Heal” training hosted by Nightlight USA that trained 36 ministries and practitioners working with victims of sex-trafficking. Funds have covered a portion of case management and ministry to two domestic sex-trafficking survivors in Los Angeles. Nightlight USA has also developed a Mobilization Kit that will be available online and at events as a tool for people to get involved with the issue locally and globally. The kit includes a DVD with two documentaries about NightLight and a short sex trafficking drama, a mobilization booklet, downloadable advocacy materials, and brochures. The kit encourages people to get involved by supporting NightLight through jewelry parties, awareness-raising events and community outreach. Grant funds were also used in part to complete a new website for NightLight International that includes the work in the U.S., brochures and marketing materials. Communities are being encouraged to work on this issue within their spheres of influence.

COSTA RICA

El Centro de Transformacion Mariposa, a family life center ministry at Mansion of Light Baptist Church in La Guacima of Alajuela, Costa Rica

El Centro de Transformacion Mariposa is a family life center ministry at the Mansion of Light Baptist Church in LaGuacima of Alajuela, Costa Rica, with a ministry based on the belief that prevention is better than rescue, especially regarding human trafficking. Children are receiving Bible teaching; moms and children have guided play sessions; parents are attending classes focusing on non-

violent parenting skills; women are attending sewing classes. Nancy Juarez, Center Director, is receiving college training in administration; new believers are coming to Christ through involvement in the Center and the Mansion of Light Church.

Funds from Break the Chains are being used for programming, staffing and training. Two young women from the church/community currently provide direct care to the children, and two others provide cleaning and nutrition services. These women also receive a small salary for childcare services.

ILLINOIS

Matthew 25 Jewelry Co-operative—Made with Love

Peoria Friendship House of Christian Service, Peoria, Illinois

A Break the Chains grant provided start-up funds for the "Matthew 25 Jewelry Cooperative -- Made with Love" bracelets, which has a two-fold purpose: (1) The bracelets serve as a reminder of our Christian faith and the ways we can reach out to help others. (2) The process involved in making and marketing the bracelets presents many challenges and opportunities for Hispanic immigrant women to learn and practice English and to work harmoniously with others, being creative and solving problems. The cooperative is constantly moving forward, meeting new requirements: quality control, learning new design techniques, the possibility of expanding into a new building, developing publicity, and finding opportunities for selling the bracelets. In all these areas, the participants (mainly Hispanic immigrant women) are included as much as possible in decision-making.

A marketing package is being developed for AB Women's Ministries groups to market the bracelets. Contact the Peoria Friendship House of Christian Service (<http://www.peoriafriendshiphouse.org/>).

PHILIPPINES

Ministries to Sex Workers in Iloilo Area

Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches

Philippines is a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor. The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 institutes policies to eliminate and punish human trafficking, and many trafficking cases are filed in court, but very few convictions are obtained. Some victims have experienced the tragedy of trying to find jobs to help their families, but ended up as sex workers.

The Philippine Baptist Convention has organized individual and small group meetings for sharing problems and dreams. Leadership seminars have been conducted, as well as seminars that focus on values, on herbal medicines as an alternative to expensive medicines, skills training in food preparation, sewing, bookkeeping and budgeting.

Also facilitated were studies of the country's Republic Act 9262 addressing Violence Against Women and Children, and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act. There has been networking with government agencies, Dept. of Social Welfare and Development, Dept. of Health, the Social Hygiene Center, with the Women

Center, and with a community organization involved against trafficking of street children and child labor.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Elizabeth House Project and Training Resources

First Baptist Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Elizabeth House has continued to pursue their goal of providing a Christ-centered ministry for women in transition or crisis, empowering them to realize their full potential. The house is zoned residential, so can only minister to two residents at a time. They do that, but, in order to expand their ministry, have been hosting ecumenical women's events, intentionally targeting women who are homeless, giving them complimentary tickets, free child care and transportation.

They have completed, and are making available to others who wish to develop residential ministry for women in transition or crisis, a start-up packet and training manual.

THAILAND

Education and Rehabilitation Services for girls

New Life Center, Chiang Mai

The New Life Center Foundation has continued its work with victims of human trafficking, slavery and other forms of exploitation. In a recent six-month period, a record number of 17 new emergency case referrals were received, stretching their emergency home to its maximum capacity.

The program director shared this information about one of their new residents: A young woman, 15, came to the New Life Center as a referral from a children's home where she had been placed by village pastors after she had been severely abused, emotionally and physically, by a violent, drug-addicted stepfather. At New Life Center, she is recovering from severe post traumatic stress disorder. She has a long road of healing ahead of her, and that has begun with exercising, counseling with a staff therapist, group art therapy, Thai language tutoring, and baking desserts for a fun activity. She will be attending adult education classes, have more Thai and English tutoring, music, and counseling—all focused on her becoming a self-confident woman who will fulfill God's purpose for her life.

--summaries compiled by Eldora Sloan,
Break the Chains Task Group member

Available from American Baptist Women's Ministries
 P.O. Box 851
 Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851

www.abwmbreakthechains.org
info@abwministries.org