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GFI Newsletter: End of Summer Update

GFI welcomes *Sweet Honey in the Rock* to the 2012 Fairness Award!

GFI is pleased to announce that DC's own internationally renowned *cappella* ensemble, **Sweet Honey in the Rock**, will bring its soulful vocal harmonies to the Fairness Award celebration on November 13. Founded in 1973 and rooted in a commitment to creating music from the richness of African American legacies and traditions, **Sweet Honey in the Rock** wraps its stunning voices around interpretations of Blues, gospel, reggae, hip hop, jazz, ancient lullabies, and more.

Sweet Honey in the Rock has performed throughout the United States and around the world, bringing songs of peace, justice, and hope. In 2009 **Sweet Honey** performed in a White House concert at the invitation of President and Mrs. Obama. After receiving a Grammy Award nomination in 2008, **Sweet Honey** composed original music for the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater's 50th anniversary, performing with them across the country. In April of this year, **Sweet Honey** presented the premiere of its new work, *Affirmations*, in performance with the National Symphony.

GFI is delighted to welcome **Sweet Honey in the Rock** members Ysaye Maria Barnwell, Nitanju Bolade Casel, Aisha Kahlil, Carol Maillard, Louise Robinson, and Shirley Childress Saxton (ASL Interpreter) to the 2012 Fairness Award!

For more information on **Sweet Honey in the Rock**, visit their website www.sweethoney.com.



GFI releases *monotributo* study in Guatemala

In the Agreement of Socio-Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation (ASESA), which came into effect during the Peace Accord of 1996, Guatemala committed to increasing its tax collection

by 50% by the year 2000 (later changed to 2002) in order to invest in programs that furthered the peace process. Since then, the government (backed by multiple institutions such as the IADB, ILO and CEPAL) has made multiple attempts to put in place and adopt programs to increase and diversify revenue without much success.

One of the recommendations of GFI's groundbreaking ***Roadmap to Formalization for Guatemala*** was the implementation of a single tax system, or *monotributo*, to integrate the informal sector into the tax base and expand provision of basic social protections. Presented by GFI to the Guatemalan government in 2010, the ***Roadmap*** reflected the consensus achieved for enacting a system that would make it easier for micro-enterprises and informal workers to pay taxes – taxpayers determine payment amount using a scaled chart and aren't required to submit account books or records. Several countries in Latin America – Uruguay, Argentina, and Ecuador – have recently adopted a simplified tax system and have already seen an expanded tax base, reduced tax evasion, and improved coverage of service.

Having been requested by the Guatemalan government to assist in determining the best ways to implement the *monotributo*, GFI conducted a study of the legality of such a system. The study, funded by the AVINA Foundation, brought together leading lawyers and jurists in the country and determined that the creation of a new system is well within Guatemala's legal framework. Agreements between existing ministries and reform of existing tax and social security laws will ensure the execution of a system that collects adequate funds while registering workers and providing benefits. The study report makes the following recommendations for *monotributo* implementation in Guatemala:

Option 1: Reform existing IGSS (social security) and SAT (taxation agency) laws

- Amend Article 47 of the VAT Law to simplify the existing regime for small contributors
- Amend Article 100 of the Constitution and Article 27 of IGSS Law, allowing progressive coverage of services and benefits
- Reform the social security regime to allow the SAT to collect the taxes and registration fees

Option 2: Draft and enact an agreement between the IGSS and SAT, with prior consent of the Constitutional Court allowing SAT to collect and redistribute payments and IGSS to manage the program

Finalizing the feasibility and implementation of the *monotributo* requires a cost-analysis of the system. The initial legal findings, however, show that Guatemala can jumpstart such a program efficiently under its current legal structure.

SAPIN Fellowship: an opportunity to work with GFI

The **SAPIN Fellowship** program, created in 2010 by the family of Dr. Shirley Sapin, honors her

commitment to equality and opportunity for all people. The Fellowship provides a stipend for an outstanding post-secondary student to spend four months with GFI researching and working on issues of economic development and workforce equity. Offered twice a year, the **Sapin Fellowship** allows students to devote an academic or summer semester to direct and substantive work on programs at the heart of economic access for the working poor. Fellows participate on all levels with GFI staff and initiatives and are exposed to the broader international development community in the Washington, DC area.



Dr. Shirley Sapin was a counselor and psychologist at institutions ranging from Cleveland State University to the Island Counseling Center of Martha's Vineyard. She spent her career working on behalf of people struggling to realize their individual goals. Living with her family in Hawaii during World War II, she witnessed racism against the native Hawaiian people and vowed to commit herself to social activism and civil rights for all people. Always devoted to the cause of social justice, Dr. Sapin served in the 1960s as a grassroots organizer for Voice of Women, working with the peace and civil rights movements, for school integration, and against nuclear testing. She later served on the boards of Big Brothers and Big Sisters and of Habitat for Humanity.

For more information about the **Sapin Fellowship**, please visit www.globalfairness.org/get-involved/sapin-fellowship.

"Sustainable long-term solutions require a mentality change. If we can see that we are all a large family living in the same world, we realize that the struggle of 15 million waste pickers is our struggle."

Albina Ruiz
2011 Fairness Award Honoree

Date confirmed:

Fairness Award 2012

Tuesday, November 13th, 2012
6:00 to 7:00 Honoree Reception
7:00 to 8:30 Awards Ceremony

The Historic Howard Theatre

RSVP today:

JOIN US AT THE 2012 FAIRNESS AWARD

TICKETS:

Please RSVP by calling 202-898-9022, or email us at rsvp@fairnessaward.org.

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Follow us!



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