



Hope For Women, LLC Who We Are

Hope For Women is a Vermont based socially responsible for-profit organization committed to providing sustainable employment to economically disadvantaged women worldwide. Hope For Women is a proud member of the Fair Trade Federation, ensuring that every woman is paid a fair, livable wage under safe and healthy working conditions. Hope For Women has offices in Burlington, Vermont and Dehra Dun, India and can be found online at www.hopeforwomen.com.

Featured Artisan Stories – India

Maya ~ Maya married young and shortly after became quite ill. Desperate for money and help, she and her husband moved to Dehradun to look for work and medical attention. A friend told Maya about Asha Kiran, an organization that is now partnering with Hope For Women. The organization gave her medical treatment and offered her a part-time job making flowered cards. Healthy again, Maya was now able to help support her family with her new skills. Maya's husband is a part time tailor. His job does not provide a regular income. Her daughter lives with her husband's family, while her son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren all live with Maya and her husband. Neither her son nor her daughter-in-law have regular jobs; Maya is the only regularly employed family member. She is proud to have a savings account into which she is able to make regular deposits each month. The rest she invests in her family – her greatest pride is paying for her grandchildren's education. Maya works full time for Hope For Women where she trains other women in the art of card making as well as producing her own unique designs. She hopes to use the extra money that a higher demand for handmade cards will bring for home improvements, which she badly needs. Like the other Hope For Women artisans, she appreciates having her own income, which is empowering for her as a woman.





Sumitra ~ Sumitra's grandmother worked in the tea gardens in the foothills of the Himalayas - a miserable job. During the rainy season, the tea workers are soaked in water up to their waists day after day; their bodies are doubled over from spending hours bending to pick the tea leaves. Sumitra grew up helping her family survive. She received little formal education, which makes her commitment to her children's education even more powerful. Her husband has a low-income job working for the state. The money she earns is what has enabled them to send their three children to school. When asked what she will do with the extra income obtained from future marketing, Sumitra said that she would save for the future. Right now her family does not have any savings to rely on for hard times or old age, but with more income they will have more security.

Poonam ~ When her husband left to go work in New Delhi, she was left alone to care for her three children. When Poonam's children began school, Poonam was plunged into further financial trouble. She became responsible for taking care of her entire family - feeding, clothing and educating her children. Never educated herself, she wants her daughters to complete their schooling so that they will have a better life. Poonam hopes to save for her children's futures and improve her home with the money she makes from creating cards.



Sushella ~ She and her husband, a gardener, moved to a larger Himalayan town, where they are raising their two sons. When her eldest son was of school age, Sushella began looking for work so that she could afford to pay for his education. Possessing only a fifth level education, Sushella strongly desires that her children have access to opportunities that she never had. When asked what she would do with the added income from a larger workload she laughs and says, "So many things!" She wants to provide all she can for her family and hopes at some point to own a house on her own piece of land.

The Organization – Dehra Dun, India



Saji Kumar ~ Saji oversees all aspects of Hope For Women in India working directly with the women artisans. He coordinates all product manufacturing and production with seamless organization and detail. Saji has over 20 years experience working on women's development programs in Northern India. He is a great cook and has led many treks in the Himalayas. Saji lives with his wife Malini and their two children in Dehra Dun.



Vidhya ~ Vidhya is a training and production manager on the Hope for Women team in India. She joined Hope For Women in late 2006 and is an excellent designer who has flourished in her role as manager. Vidhya is in charge of leading trainings for women interested in working with Hope For Women, as well as supervising greeting card production in Dehra Dun. Vidhya lives in Dehra Dun.



Babli ~ Babli has been friends with Hope For Women president, Evan Goldsmith, for almost 14 years and is one of the original Hope For Women artisans. She lives in the Himalayan foothills with her children and is an entrepreneur at heart. Babli creates and produces the Mountain Collection greeting cards and also manages the Mountain Collection team.

The Organization – Burlington, Vermont



Evan Goldsmith ~ The idea for Hope For Women began in a small village in the Indian Himalayas in 1993. At that time Evan Goldsmith was working with a local group devoted to women's development and environmental issues when he noticed a missing opportunity. He watched a group of trained artisan women working long days crafting beautiful handmade note cards and envelopes using flowers and other plants that grew locally in the valleys and mountains of the Himalayas. Since they had no access to sustainable markets to sell their cards, they received small financial rewards for their incredible efforts and neither they nor their families could take advantage of the valuable skills they acquired. Upon returning to the United States, Evan created Hope For Women to develop a sustainable financial resource to market the women's products. Evan has also worked on urban sprawl/land use issues in Vermont, as well as teaching high school biology and environmental science in Washington, DC. Evan lives in Burlington with his wife and two children.



David Goldsmith ~ David Goldsmith has over 40 years of senior management experience functioning as Founder, President and Vice Chairman of both publicly traded and privately owned companies manufacturing and marketing both consumer and industrial products. In addition, he was the Principal Founder of a development company creating new businesses for major Fortune 100 companies employing a proprietary “turn key” program. He holds recognition as an arbitrator by the American Arbitration Association and has functioned as a Director and Board member for multiple organizations. David is Evan’s father and Hope For Women business partner. He resides in Burlington with his wife.