



Middle East

## USAID AWARDS CREATIVE ASSOCIATES THE JORDAN EDUCATION REFORM SUPPORT PROGRAM

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded Creative Associates International, Inc. the Jordan Education Reform Support Program (ERSP).

Creative is a recognized leader in education programming with more than 32 years of experience working worldwide, including the Arab world. Under the \$42 million ERSP, Creative will help develop and sustain components for the second phase of the Jordanian Ministry of Education's Reform for the Knowledge Economy project (ERfKE), launched more than five years ago. The second phase of ERfKE will begin July 1.

The ERSP program's overarching goal is to support the Ministry of Education's reform efforts to produce graduates whose skills are competitive and sought after in a knowledge economy. It will support ERfKE by building a system for the professional development of teachers and principals, provide high-quality early childhood education, give high school students the skills they need to participate productively in the workforce, and help schools and directorates make decisions based on broad participation and sound data.

Creative will implement ERSP with its partners, Save the Children Federation, Inc. (SC), ChangeAgent for Arab Development and Education Reform (CADER), Seward, Inc. and EMI Systems, Inc. Creative will also work closely with the Jordan Education Initiative (JEI).

***“Creative Associates is honored to have the opportunity to work with our counterparts in the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan through the Education Reform Support Program...”***

***M. Charito Kruvant  
President & CEO  
Creative Associates International, Inc.***



PHOTO BY: JEANNE MOULTON, CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC.

INCREASINGLY TECH-SAVVY, JORDANIAN GIRLS COLLABORATE ON A SCHOOL PROJECT.

“Creative Associates is honored to have the opportunity to work with our counterparts in the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan through the Education Reform Support Program,” said Creative’s President and CEO, M. Charito Kruvant, in announcing the award. “Together with USAID support, we will strive to build on advances made and deliver the highest quality of services for the benefit of the Ministry of Education, its teachers’ and students’ continued progress and future success.”

Working with the Ministry of Education, Creative will introduce models and processes that foster public and private partnerships and institutional change. It will develop and implement effective school-level training and support programs. These interventions are designed to develop a critical mass of schools in which models and processes have been implemented with the full participation of Ministry of Education staff and teachers.

ERSP will provide comprehensive professional development through pre-service and in-service teacher training and support in primary schools. The project will also provide training and support for Ministry officials, teachers and supervisors in kindergartens. It will also refurbish kindergarten classrooms, renovate and equip school playgrounds and help teachers and students make the best use of these facilities.

The Creative team will also help institutionalize the School-to-Career program and an on-line management-information curriculum to help high school students explore career pathways and develop workforce skills. The Creative team will support the MOE in developing partnerships with the private sector and introduce approaches to engage parents in their children’s education.

Creative has 20 offices worldwide and currently implements education projects in Af-

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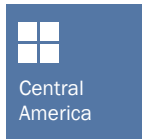
ghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Nigeria, Oman, Southern Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uganda.

Creative has also worked with the Ministry of Education in Iraq from 2003-2006 in two major USAID initiatives to help restore Iraq's basic education capacities, including the training of teachers and refurbishment and rebuilding of schools.

In addition to USAID, Creative's clients include the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense, and other international donors. A privately-owned non-governmental organization based in Washington, D.C., Creative addresses urgent challenges facing societies today. Whether they are shifts in demographics, the workplace, the classroom, technology, the political arena or the needs of stabilization in post-conflict environments,

Creative views change as an opportunity to improve, transform and renew. The firm helps clients turn transitional environments into a positive force toward creating more empowered and effective communities, systems and institutions.

For more information about Creative Associates, contact Jeff Ghannam, Director of Communications and Media Development at [JeffG@caii.com](mailto:JeffG@caii.com) or visit [www.caii.com](http://www.caii.com).



## EL SALVADOR: OUTREACH CENTERS ENABLE YOUTH TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

Back in the 1990s, Pastor Carlos Artiga called himself "Flash," after a TV superhero who confronted villains with super-human powers. But Artiga, a member of the notorious 18th Street gang at the time, was no hero.

Today, however, he is helping society as Pastor of the Abba Patter Evangelical Ministry and director of an Outreach Center which serves young people whom he understands all too well – youth-at-risk in San Salvador's Lourdes barrio. The center called "Por Mi Barrio" or For My Neighborhood, serves 280 youth daily, many of whom come at Artiga's invitation.

The Lourdes Por Mi Barrio is one of 14 such centers established in El Salvador,

Guatemala and Honduras by Creative Associates International, Inc. of Washington, D.C. with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development and donors including the Rotary Club and IBIS, among others.

These centers have been established through the Youth Challenge Alliance Program of USAID/Guatemala and the Regional Youth Alliance USAID-SICA programs. The programs are based on a Creative methodology that seeks to help reduce the level of gang activity in Central America by engaging youth in skills-building and vocational training.

"Creative Associates has developed a new philosophy with the Outreach Centers," said Harold Sibaja, Chief of Party of Creative's Youth Challenge Alliance program in Guatemala. "The beneficiaries who come to the Centers learn about computers, arts, sports or just to meet other youth, get trained in leadership, conflict management and community service.

"Our intent is to develop a new leadership that promotes a culture of life in contrast to the culture of death and fear that reigns in many of these communities," Sibaja said. "Next month Guatemala will open 10 new Outreach Centers. By December 2009, there will be 37 Centers in operation in the three countries. With these additional Centers we expect to serve a population of more than 9,000 youth."

Salvador Stadthagen, based in El Salvador, director for the Regional Youth Alliance USAID-SICA, said the Centers are emerging as low-cost sustainable alternatives that rely heavily on community volunteers who engage at-risk youth in productive

activities. More than 4,000 young people and 300 volunteers are already part of the Outreach Center effort in the three countries.

Orphaned at age 11 and without family or guidance, Artiga fit the profile of youth who are vulnerable to gang recruitment. He joined 18th Street at age 17 in 1993 in search of security and a surrogate family. But gang life failed to fill the void. Artiga felt alone and betrayed by friends. "I was addicted to crack, and ended up with lots of gunshot wounds," Artiga said.

Through a chance encounter, he met a stranger who told him about Jesus and redemption. Artiga joined the church and found a way out of gang life and a way to do good for society and himself.

"The role of the church was huge in my ability to reform," Artiga said. "The church enabled me to take theology classes, helped me find a job, became my family, my community and support."

Heidi Moran, a coordinator at the Santa Caterina Pinula Por Mi Barrio center in Guatemala, arrived at the center in May 2007 and says, "I joined the center because I fell in love with the idea that youth have somewhere to go everyday, see the same people and have a routine.

"The youth must understand that coming to the outreach center requires them to change certain aspects of their lives," Moran said. "Their outlook is often limited to 25 years of age. If they join a gang, their lifespan will be cut short, so we try to have them establish long-term goals."

— Alexandra Pratt and Linda Adami.



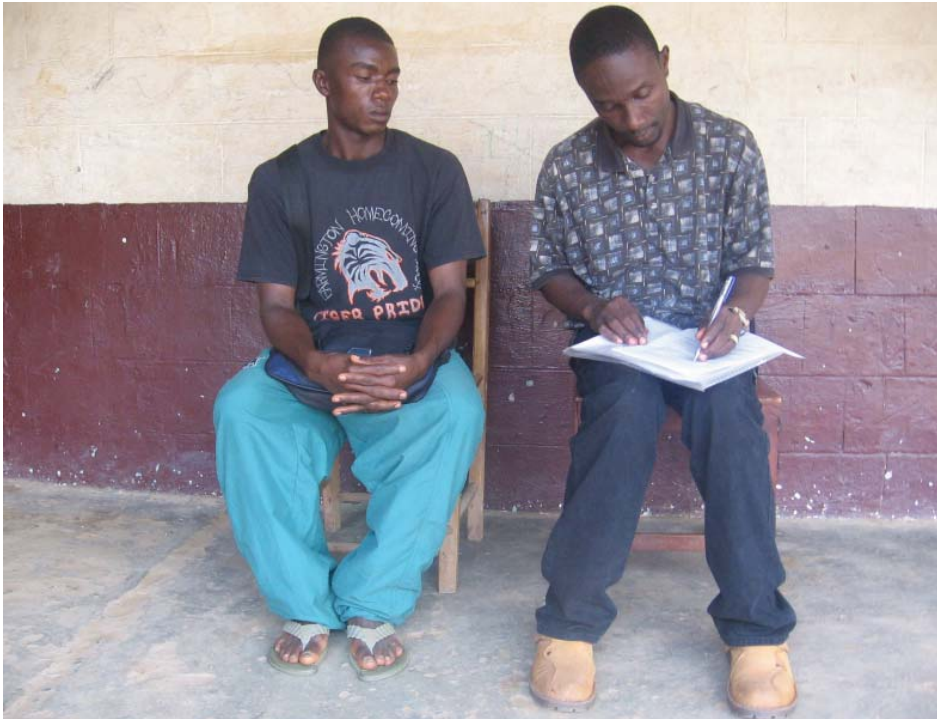
PHOTO BY: REGIONAL USAID-SICA STAFF

PASTOR ARTIGA, LEFT, ATTENDS THE RIBBON-CUTTING OF THE LOURDES OUTREACH CENTER. THE REGIONAL USAID-SICA PROGRAM OUTREACH CENTERS, LOCATED IN CENTRAL AMERICA'S HARD HIT BARRIOS, PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH RECREATION AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO HELP DIRECT THEM AWAY FROM GANG INFLUENCES.



# LIBERIA: ALP PLUS PROVIDES YOUNG ADULTS A SECOND CHANCE AT EDUCATION

PHOTO BY: ANTHONY KAMAHNOON, ALP PLUS OFFICE ASSISTANT.



rudimentary schooling was available, families could hardly benefit because they were constantly on the move to avoid capture.

The ALP PLUS program gives Liberian youth hope for a better future. The program's youth component serves youth and young adults ages 15 to 35 in six of the country's 15 counties and enables participants to acquire basic primary education plus life skills training. Since the program's launch, 833 have graduated. Without ALP PLUS, Susanna, Stephen and the majority of their fellow students would have to resort to learning to read and write in classes with children six, seven and eight years old.

"At the age of 31, there is no way that I could have gone to day school to sit among young children," said Susanna recalling that her son, 6 years old at the time, told her, 'Mommie, you're too big to go to school!' 'I told him he was wrong.'

To Stephen, 26, relative calm prevailed in his hometown in the 1990s, enabling him to attend school for five years. He joined ALP PLUS in 2007. "I found the ALP PLUS classes different from the classes that I attended in the past," he said. "ALP allows us to openly discuss among ourselves. In the conventional classes the teacher did most of the talking."

ALP PLUS' student-centered curriculum also includes math, language arts, social studies and life skills. Last May, Susanna and Stephen were two of 148 Bong County youth who completed ALP PLUS.

Susanna plans to continue her schooling and wants ultimately to study economics and attend Cuttington University, Liberia's oldest. Stephen's personal aspiration is to improve his masonry skills and move beyond the status of a daily hire so that he could "learn a new vocational trade that will enable me to be productive."

— Gail von Hahmann with assistance from Aaron Kokolie, ALP PLUS Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Phoebe Waritay, ALP PLUS Training Officer, Kenneth Harding, ALP PLUS Program Development Officer for Youth and from Talking Drum Studio radio drama production team.

FOR STUDENTS IN THEIR 30s, ALP PLUS PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER LOST YEARS OF SCHOOLING BECAUSE OF WAR OR HARDSHIP. ALP PLUS GRADUATE, STEPHEN (LEFT), NOW ATTENDS 7TH GRADE AND PLANS TO PURSUE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Second chances are rare for Liberia's young adults, particularly those in their early thirties who lack a basic education. But ALP PLUS is enabling many young adults to receive an education.

Susanna is among them. She's a graduate of Creative's ALP PLUS classes, an accelerated learning program that has enabled her to earn her sixth-grade certificate in just three years.

To help convey the challenges that Liberia's young adults confront, Susanna plays a character in an ALP PLUS workshop performance. In the play, Susanna's character must withstand the taunts of loitering, unemployed youth on her way to and from school. She finally complains about the youth to her school leaders and town elders and soon, dialogue between the youth and elders helps convince a few of Susanna's tormentors to return to school themselves.

The workshop drama was created by graduates of the ALP PLUS program and produced under the direction of Talking Drum Studios, a program partner that also produces the program's weekly broadcast about youth issues, "Let's Learn

Together." ALP PLUS is implemented by Creative Associates International, Inc. with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

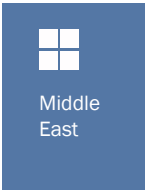
At the Gbarnga retreat center in Liberia's Bong County, the audience applauds and the play's cast introduce themselves.

"I am Susanna and I am a graduate of ALP PLUS and am now in the seventh grade."

"I am Stephen and I am a graduate of ALP PLUS and am now in the seventh grade."

When she was 11, Susanna's hometown came under attack by various factions vying for power. For the next 15 years, periods of calm were followed by periods of extreme violence, making normal life impossible, including attending school. When the fighting came close to Gbarnga, Susanna and her neighbors fled to the forest. "But, still, it was not safe," said Susanna. Still, during this period, she managed to acquire three years of schooling.

Liberia is a country transitioning from nearly 23 years of civil strife, a period during which the government lost the capacity to provide educational services. Even where



# WEST BANK: WITH MEPI SUPPORT, CREATIVE PROVIDES COMMUNITIES COMPUTERS AND INTERNET ACCESS

The Jaba Youth Center will open a computer lab in June with the assistance of a Creative Associates' Community Leadership Empowerment Project (CLEP) award. The lab will provide young people, college students, new graduates and other citizens alike the opportunity to take training classes and access the internet to conduct research or look for work.

The \$25,000 award will provide 14 computers that will be used by young women and men in Jaba and surrounding villages in the northern West Bank governorate of Jenin. The town of Jaba, population 11,000, does not have an internet café and unemployment hovers at 70 percent. The award is also the first of its kind from a foreign donor to any organization in Jaba.

"Creative Associates is honored to partner with the Jaba Youth Club on this important project that will provide opportunities to the youth and civil society of Jaba," said Creative's Country Director Ben Orbach. "The leadership exhibited by Marwan Khaliliyah, Hassan Kana'n and the rest of the Jaba Youth Club's new board is exemplary. They are working hard for the benefit of their community and we are proud to support their efforts. We look forward to visiting the computer lab and seeing the Jaba Youth Club's great success."

The Creative-implemented Community Leadership Empowerment Program is supported by the U.S. Department of State's Middle East Partnership Initia-

tor partners in the Jenin community. The Jaba Local Council provided the Youth Center with rent-free space in a new building next to offices of the Red Crescent for an entire year, with the promise of continued support if the Youth Club leadership is successful. And the electric company is paying the running costs for the building and for the computer lab; prominent members of the community have made other contributions. At the May 12th signing ceremony of the CLEP award, the Governor of Jenin, Qad-dura Musa, lauded the efforts of the Youth Club's board and thanked Creative for its support. Mr. Musa also said "this is the first project of its kind in the town of Jaba. I wish the Administrative Board represented by Mr. Marwan Khaliliyah all the best of progress and success." The Mayor of Jaba, Zia Alawneh, commended the Club's new board for its "distinction and persevering efforts on behalf of Jaba."

Focusing on activities for young people, the Jaba Youth Club boasts soccer and volleyball teams, offers leadership and other educational courses, runs a summer camp and hosts cultural activities such as folklore dance performances and community events during Ramadan. Members pay symbolic annual dues and the Youth Center also receives community donations. Established in 1995, the Jaba Youth Center now has 248 members. Its board is committed to transforming the Youth Club to a place of even greater importance in Jaba's civic life, Orbach said.

Given the active leadership of the new board, with Mr. Khaliliyah at its helm, the Youth Club is receiving strong support from the Jaba Local Council, Jenin's Governor, other local political figures and private-

tor partners in the Jenin community. The Jaba Local Council provided the Youth Center with rent-free space in a new building next to offices of the Red Crescent for an entire year, with the promise of continued support if the Youth Club leadership is successful. And the electric company is paying the running costs for the building and for the computer lab; prominent members of the community have made other contributions.

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"Jaba is considered a marginalized area by international donors. . . and the computer lab will help An Najah University and Arab American University of Jenin students with their homework and research, and encourage community members of all ages to take computer lessons," said Mr. Khaliliyah at the signing ceremony.

— Muhammed Diab, Gideon Culman and Ben Orbach.



PHOTO BY: MUHAMMED DIAB

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FOR STRUGGLING WEST BANK COMMUNITIES LIKE JABA, THE MEPI-SUPPORTED CLEP AWARD WILL ENABLE PALESTINIANS OF ALL AGES ACCESS TO COMPUTERS AND THE INTERNET.

# SOUTH SUDAN: COMMUNITY COLLABORATION KEEPS CHILDREN LEARNING IN SCHOOL

PHOTOS BY: HEAR SUDAN STAFF



TWICE BURNED AND REBUILT WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE HEALTH EDUCATION AND RECONCILIATION (HEAR) SUDAN PROJECT, THIS KURMUK SCHOOL FENCE HELPS KEEPS INTRUSIONS AT BAY SO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN FOCUS ON THE LEARNING PROCESS.

A hotbed of conflict during more than two decades of war, the Kurmuk community in Blue Nile State has placed its hopes for prolonged peace on educating its children. So, when the bamboo fence around Kurmuk Model School was destroyed not once, but twice, the community rallied to rebuild it.

With help from the PTA, community members saw first-hand how collaborative efforts can help keep their dreams alive for their children’s continued education. And with a small grant from the Health, Education and Reconciliation (HEAR) Sudan project, the community built the school’s fence. Implemented by Creative Associates International, HEAR Sudan is supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Without a fence the school compound – situated in the heart of Kurmuk’s busy marketplace – was left exposed to vandalism, misuse of its property and stray animals coming in to graze. The situation threatened to disrupt the learning process for the school’s 600 pupils and 14 teachers.

Shortly after the fence was first built, the gate and parts of the fence were destroyed by some military forces which used the school to hold an event. “It takes minutes or seconds to destroy, but the rebuilding is a big problem,” said Hellen Samia Rajad, the Deputy Headmistress of Kurmuk Model School. “As a mother, it pains me to see the property for our children being destroyed.”

A hardy and resilient group, the PTA, which recently received training in civic action by the HEAR Sudan project, organized a meeting with community members to seek a solution. In its quest, the PTA appealed to the police and ultimately to the governor’s office. The PTA requested compensation for the destroyed fence and its reconstruction.

“We have fought for 31 years, why do we have to fight now?” said Rajad, referring to the military troops accused of having damaged the school’s property. “Even if we don’t have the power to fight them, we will make them sit down and listen to us. We have to be one, so we can achieve our goal. We have to continue working very closely with each other, for the sake of the future of our children.”

The PTA and community members successfully negotiated with the responsible parties to acknowledge their fault and agree to repair the damaged fence and gate. But only a few months later, a fire broke out at a kiosk selling fuel near the school. Within minutes, the blaze engulfed the Kurmuk Model School’s new fence, leaving it in a pile of ashes.

Discouraged but undefeated, the school’s head teacher and PTA sprang into action, again. They mobilized the community to bring materials and contribute their labor, and a new fence was put in place within just two days, without outside assistance, a testament to the community’s organizational skills acquired through HEAR Sudan training.

One of HEAR Sudan’s main components is to strengthen community support for school governance and outreach through conflict avoidance and resolution strategies. An element of this includes the role of groups such as PTAs in their collaborations with local communities, often serving in the role of a community arbiter. The PTA’s and community’s vigorous but non-violent responses to these incidents are strong indications that the project is achieving its desired goals, said Creative’s Sandhya Badrinath, who served as HEAR Sudan Interim Chief of Party earlier this year.

The community is now building latrines for the school, also an indication of a shift in the attitude toward increased community engagement in social services that will likely foster an enhanced sense of mutual ownership and responsibility.

“HEAR has really done a lot for us,” Rajad said. “They built a gate and fence for our school, trained teachers, and provided health education, which is really important to us. We really appreciate what HEAR is doing.”

— Japheth Mugumo with Sandhya Badrinath, Sabina Henneberg and Alexandra Pratt.



# SRI LANKA: A CREATIVE PROJECT CONTINUES TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

In an outstanding example of program sustainability, Creative’s Accelerated Skills Acquisition Program curriculum has been licensed to a Sri Lankan training company that will continue to provide the program’s workforce readiness skills training for thousands of unemployed youth in Sri Lanka.

The arrangement represents a major milestone in a new era of development in which partnerships help accomplish shared objectives. The licensing of the ASAP curriculum to Gateway College is also the first such public- private partnership in Sri Lanka for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) which funded the initiative and for Creative Associates International, Inc., the project implementer.

“Most often projects start and stop, a lot of good work is done, but dies when the project closes,” said ASAP Chief of Party, Shevanthi Jayasuriya. “From day one, I said this project has to continue beyond its mandate and so we found a way that USAID would not have to support it. We decided to find a private-sector licensee to hand over the program and carry on ASAP.”

Gateway won the ASAP license through a competitive process that included a pool of

16 private-sector applicants, which underscores the need to engage the private sector early on for sustainability opportunities. ASAP has strengthened the capacity of 22 private training centers throughout Sri Lanka to deliver quality training, job counseling, placement assistance and school-to-work services that improve employment possibilities for youth ages 15 to 25.

**“ASAP has really filled the void in the country in terms of providing soft skills - teaching youth how to present themselves, behavior, attitude and so on”**

**Dr. Harsha Alles  
CEO  
Gateway College**

“ASAP has really filled the void in the country in terms of providing soft skills – teaching youth how to present themselves, behavior, attitude and so on,” said Gateway CEO Dr. Harsha Alles. “Gateway has a strong background in providing IT and English language training, but the soft skills component was lacking. When this opportunity [the ASAP license] came up, we [Gateway] were keen to take it on. We

feel that through ASAP we have become more of a complete training organization.” The interest in ASAP is manifold for Sri Lankan stakeholders, especially the private sector, which is preoccupied with finding skilled workers to enable them to compete in the global economy.

Another boost to ASAP’s sustainability has been the enthusiastic endorsement of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce which preceded partnerships between ASAP and four of the island’s major corporations – Cargills, John Keels Hotels/Supermarkets, Unilever and Dimo (a Mercedes Benz subsidiary). The project has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education for an Asian Development Bank funded activity to provide 5,000 youth with ASAP training for this year and will train others in subsequent years.

ASAP’s curricula are customized to the needs of Sri Lankan youth whose lack of skills deter their entry into the labor market. About 86 percent of Sri Lankan youth who have earned their O and A Levels fail to gain admission to university and about one third of them remain unemployed, particularly women whose rate of unemployment is 40 percent compared to 27

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PHOTO BY: ASAP STAFF

BENEFICIARIES OF ASAP’S TRAINING, THESE YOUNG WOMEN LEARNED SKILLS THAT WILL HELP THEM GET JOBS. THE ASAP TRAINING CURRICULUM WILL NOW BE OFFERED BY A LEADING SRI LANKAN TRAINING INSTITUTION AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SO THAT THOUSANDS MORE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN RECEIVE WORKFORCE SKILLS.

## SRI LANKA: A CREATIVE PROJECT CONTINUES TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

percent for men. ASAP is the only program specifically oriented toward building the employability skills of these O and A Level school leavers.

“The difference between ASAP (candidates) and someone you hire off the street is that ASAP candidates are able to work as a team, show commitment. They have a plan, a goal, a vision,” said Susil de Alwis, general manager of The Privilege Hotel, who says that despite a six percent unemployment rate, he has difficulty finding qualified personnel.

But thanks to ASAP, the pool of qualified applicants has improved.

“One of the boys I hired came from an extremely poor village,” Alwis said. “Having little exposure to the job market, he had little confidence in his abilities. But having gone through ASAP, he now has the potential to be a general manager. I think ASAP motivates people to go to greater heights.”

To date, more than 7,000 Sri Lankan youth have completed the Creative ASAP course, and of these approximately 2,000 have obtained employment or are in apprenticeships. ASAP course work focuses on job search strategies and building employability through Life Skills, English language instruction and computer literacy, enabling students to seek multiple job opportunities, not just those in the service sector which accounts for only 51 percent of the country’s employment opportunities.

Creative’s ASAP curriculum provides a 5-day, 10-day and 20-day course. While the shortest course consists mainly of lessons on how to develop a résumé and conduct oneself in a job interview, the 10-day course provides English speaking skills and an IT course. The longest course includes a segment in building entrepreneurial skills.

“USAID’s commitment to the development of Sri Lanka’s workforce grew out of our

belief that the private sector is the engine of economic growth and employment,” said Rebecca Cohn, USAID Mission Director in Sri Lanka. “We designed ASAP to be a bold new program to address the skills gap...ASAP is designed based on what the private sector told us they needed in employees – soft skills, good attitudes, proper work ethic, as well as English language and IT skills.”

The Creative ASAP curriculum is expected to continue to benefit the youth of the Sri Lankan island. According to Dr. Alles, “the approach we are taking is to form an entity which will be almost independent of Gateway, we want to link with corporations, schools, universities, NGOs. We are even expanding ASAP with new programs to include training for those who just joined the job market – the new organization will be called Skills for Life.”

– Alexandra Pratt

## ■ CORPORATE NEWS

### CREATIVE EXPERTS LEAD THE FIRM’S NEW INITIATIVE IN JORDAN

Creative’s newly awarded Jordan Education Reform Support Program (ERSP) will be led by two development veterans who have distinguished records of accomplishment at the firm.

Peggy Poling, who until recently served as Chief of Party of the Accelerated Learning Program PLUS education project in Liberia, will serve as Chief of Party of the Jordan ERSP. She will be joined by Eileen St. George, as Deputy Chief of Party. St. George led Creative’s Afghanistan Primary Education Program (APEP) and served as Deputy Director of the Basic Education Policy Support (BEPS) activity, until 2006.

In addition to Liberia, Poling has served in Afghanistan and Pakistan where she successfully managed and implemented complex education projects in post-conflict environments. Under the \$15 million Accelerated Learning Program PLUS, she

led the program to bring literacy to nearly 20,000 former combatants and youth. An education expert, Poling brings more than 20 years of experience in program and project design, management and implementation, teacher training and accelerated learning. She received a Ph.D in Adult and Vocational Education from Pennsylvania State University.

St. George brings 23 years of experience working in Africa, Asia and the United States. As project director of the \$95 million APEP, she led the program’s expansion and reach from three to 17 provinces in Afghanistan. Since 2006, she has worked in Vietnam and Cambodia as an education planning and monitoring and evaluation consultant. She received a D.Phil from Florida State University.



PEGGY POLING (TOP) IS JORDAN ERSP CHIEF OF PARTY AND EILEEN ST. GEORGE SERVES AS DEPUTY CHIEF OF PARTY.

PHOTOS BY: ALP PLUS STAFF AND CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC.

## CREATIVE ANNOUNCES PROMOTIONS FOR SENIOR VP PABLO MALDONADO AND SENIOR VP LARRY LAI

Creative Associates International, Inc., a leading implementer of programs for the U.S. Agency for International Development, has promoted Pablo Maldonado to Senior Vice President of the Office of Programs and Larry Lai to Senior Vice President of Development and Administration, the firm's President and CEO, M. Charito Kruvant announced.

"These appointments will enhance Creative's ability to carry out its mission and be of service to our clients and those who benefit from our projects," said Mrs. Kruvant, who founded Creative as a minority-women owned and managed firm 32 years ago.

Mr. Maldonado, who joined the firm in 1983, has led the development of Creative's Office of Marketing and Operations and will now oversee the firm's portfolio of programs in 20 countries worldwide that are implemented by the firm's three divisions: the Education, Mobilization and Communication division, the Communities in Transition division, and the Creative Center for Stabilization and Development.

In his new position, Mr. Maldonado will provide guidance and direction for the three directors and vice presidents of the firm's program divisions. In previous roles, he has served as Acting Director of the Com-

munities in Transition division and helped position the firm as a leading implementer of programs in conflict affected environments. Mr. Maldonado has also directed Creative's two Regional Offices, in Nairobi, Kenya and in Guatemala City, Guatemala. He received a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from the School of Mathematics, Physics and Engineering at Catholic University in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he was born. He also received a master's degree in marketing from the Kogod School of Business Administration at American University in Washington D.C.

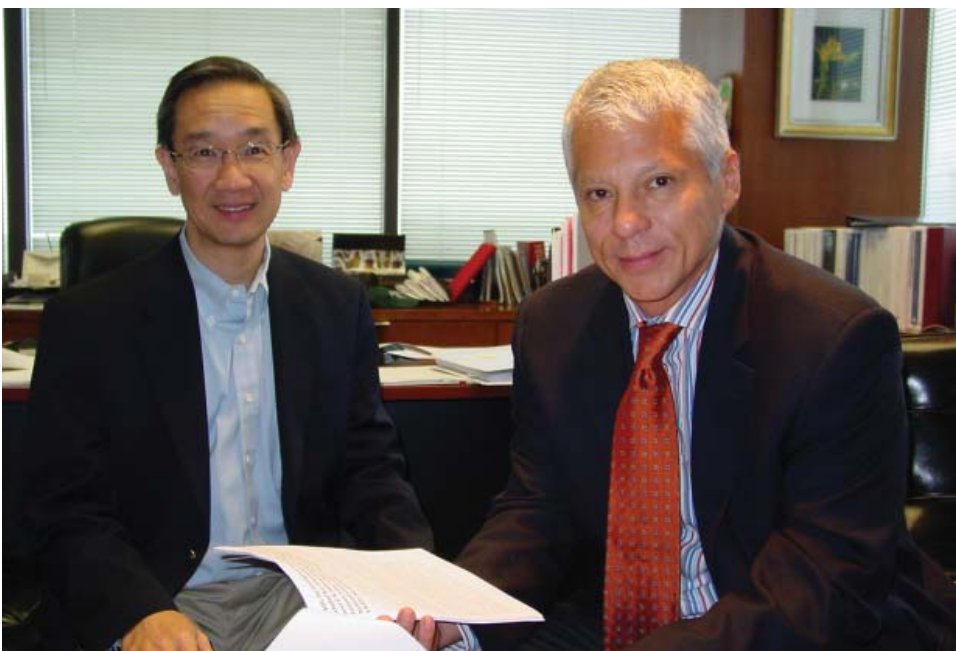
Mr. Lai has served as Vice President of the Education, Mobilization and Communication division and will now lead the firm's operations under the new name of Development and Administration. He will oversee Business Development, Field Operations, Security and Emergency Preparedness, Strategic Management, Procurement and Logistics, Information Management, Communications and Media, Human Resources, and Office Administration.

A six year veteran of Creative, Mr. Lai managed highly successful education projects in some of the world's most volatile environments, including Afghanistan, Iraq and Liberia. He has a quarter century of development experience and has held pre-

vious positions at the Institute for International Education, and Science Applications International Corp. He is also a member of the board of directors of the Society for International Development. He received a master of science in environmental engineering and a bachelor of science in biology, both from the Illinois Institute of Technology.

In addition to USAID, Creative's clients include the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of State and many other international donors including The World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. A privately-owned non-governmental organization, Creative addresses urgent challenges facing societies today. Whether they are shifts in demographics, the workplace, the classroom, technology, the political arena or the needs of stabilization in post-conflict environments, Creative views change as an opportunity to improve, transform and renew. The firm helps clients turn transitional environments into a positive force toward creating more empowered and effective communities, systems and institutions.

For more information about Creative Associates, contact Jeff Ghannam, Director of Communications and Media Development at [JeffG@caii.com](mailto:JeffG@caii.com).



***Creative's Senior Vice President Pablo Maldonado, right, has been promoted to lead the firm's Office of Programs. Senior Vice President Larry Lai will direct the firm's Office of Development and Administration.***

PHOTO BY: LAZARINA TODOROVA, CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC.



# NEW FACES



**Maria Veronica Blankenship** joins Creative as Field Human Resources Manager.

Veronica, as she is known, will develop, implement and enforce HR policies and procedures that govern Creative employees both in Washington, D.C. and in the firm's 20 field offices.

Veronica comes to Creative from the International Human Resources Business Partner for the Society for Research Administrators (SRA) International, in Arlington, Va. While at SRA, she led HR functions related to expatriates and non-U.S. nationals, including the development of global HR policies. Veronica has also served as Human Resources Manager at several firms, including Casals & Associates and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. She developed hiring and termination protocols and trained supervisors in how to conduct ongoing performance management, while advising on specific performance issues.

Veronica received a bachelor's degree in Industrial Relations from Catholic University Andrés Bello, in Caracas, Venezuela. She also holds a Global Professional in Human Resources (GPHR) certification. She is fluent in Spanish.

**Jane Casewit** joins Creative as a Senior Associate in the Education, Mobilization and Communication division where she will lead workforce and vocational education initiatives.

Before Creative, Jane spent more than 20 years in Morocco and served in various capacities for USAID/Morocco, including as Cognizant Technical Officer for oversight of the "Advancing Learning and Employability for a Better Future" project and the "Moroccan Education/Employment Alliance". In this capacity, Jane was responsible for the design and oversight of out-of-school youth activities. During this period, she also oversaw USAID Morocco's education portfolio.



Jane is a familiar face at Creative. She served as an Advocacy Specialist in a former Creative project called "Morocco Education for Girls." Jane has also been a teacher of ESL and assisted in curriculum development for the Arabic Language Institute in Fez, Morocco.

She received a master's degree in International Education from Framingham State College Extension Service in Framingham, Mass. She also holds a master of philosophy in education from the University of Manchester in England. She graduated with honors from the University of Durham, England where she received a bachelor of arts in Chinese Language and Civilization.

A polyglot, Jane speaks seven languages including: French, Classical and Moroccan dialect Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, German and Chinese (Mandarin).

# NEW FACES

# NEW FACES



**Richard Larde** joins Creative’s newly established Recruitment Unit in the Office of Development and Administration as an International Recruitment Manager. He brings nearly a decade of experience recruiting for senior-level personnel, including a Fortune 500 company.

Before Creative, Richard was a Senior Recruiter for Futurestep, a Korn/Ferry Company and global enterprise with more than 700 employees, committed to helping organizations discover and attract quality candidates. He has also served as a Senior Recruiter for CARE in Atlanta, Georgia, where he consulted with management to develop and implement a comprehensive recruiting strategy. At CARE, Richard also developed a Human Resources Recruitment Metrics and provided strategic guidance and technical assistance to the East and Central Africa field offices and U.S.- based divisions on all aspects of human resources management.

At Creative, Richard will collaborate with Business Development, Human Resources and program divisions. Among his professional accomplishments, Richard increased annual sales and consistently received the “Top Producer of the Quarter Award” at a previous employer in Atlanta. He also received the sales achievement award presented by the Georgia Society of Personnel Services for two consecutive years.

He received a bachelor’s in Accounting from Morris Brown College in Atlanta. He enjoys community service including volunteering as mentor to elementary school students and at community shelters.

**Muhammed A. Liman** joins Creative as a Chief of Party for the Health Education and Reconciliation Project (HEAR Sudan) based in Rumbek, Sudan. He will also travel to project sites in Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.



A 10-year veteran of development initiatives, Muhammed has designed education programs throughout Namibia that have focused on HIV/AIDS, orphan and vulnerable children and teacher education intervention programs. He has consulted widely for UN agencies, governments and USAID in Namibia and Nigeria.

Muhammed launched his career in international development in 1999, after a decade spent as a science teacher. Prior to joining Creative, he spent four years as Chief of Party for several projects in Namibia, including a PEPFAR program where he initiated and piloted the first teacher health day program. The program provided education sector employees with medical tests.

Muhammed has published numerous articles on teacher education in Namibia and is the recipient of the Academy for Educational Development’s Management and Technical Achievement Award for “brilliant and innovative work”.

He received a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, and a master’s in chemical education from the University of South Africa in Pretoria. Muhammed is currently pursuing a doctorate in international education from the University of Sussex in England.



**Shaun M. McNally** joins Creative’s Center for Stabilization & Development as Legal Governance Advisor for the Iraq Local Governance Program III. Creative is implementing LGP III as a subcontractor to RTI.

Shaun will be based in Iraq, where he will ensure consistency in implementation of work plan activities related to the application of Law 21, the Law of Governorates for areas not incorporated into a region.

Before Creative, he worked in Iraq as the Food Security Advisor for USAID. In that position, he monitored the Iraqi Government’s national food ration system and provided technical assistance to U.S. Mission officials and the U.S. Military. He has also served as Chief of Party and Country Director for the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs in Albania and later, as Executive Director of the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance.

Shaun received a master’s degree in Public Administration from Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, Mass., and a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from the University of Connecticut in Storrs.

**Christiana Wilson** joins Creative as a Human Resources Generalist. In this role, she will manage benefits administration and recruitment for Washington, D.C. staff.



Christiana’s human resources experience includes positions in such diverse organizations as Sibley Memorial Hospital and Conservation International, a nonprofit based in the Washington D.C. area that seeks to protect the earth’s biodiversity hotspots including wilderness areas and important marine regions.

Christiana has also helped administer the George Washington University’s health and welfare programs, and assisted in resolving disputes for active and retired staff.

Christiana received a master of science in administration degree in organizational management from Trinity Washington University and a bachelor’s degree in history from Howard University, both in Washington, D.C.

# NEW FACES

PHOTOS BY: LAZARINA TODOROVA AND ALEXANDRA PRATT



## PHOTO OF THE SEASON: BUILDING EDUCATION SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR TEACHERS (BESST) PROJECT



PHOTO BY: BESST STAFF

Creative's President and CEO, M. Charito Kruvant, traveled to Afghanistan in April where she witnessed the impact of the Building Education Support Systems for Teachers project, known as BESST, and met with project staff members who gave her a warm welcome. During her visit, she also highlighted Creative's commitment to education and empowering individuals, institutions and communities to ultimately direct their own development. The five-year BESST project works directly with the Afghanistan Ministry of Education, at several levels, to assist the ministry in meeting new educational demands. Pictured with Mrs. Kruvant, left to right, are BESST Translator, Hamid Walizad, Finance Officer, Omid Mansoori, and IT Assistant, Shoab Sultani.

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Creative Associates International Inc., is a private, professional services firm headquartered in Washington, D.C. Since its inception in 1977, Creative has assisted governments, communities, NGOs, and private companies worldwide to lead and to manage change.

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