MICRO ANATOLIA, by Ecem Erseker ‘11

It has been five years since I started my Lang Project journey, having founded Micro Anatolia Microfinance Fund in 2009. Micro Anatolia is a microfinance seed fund serving women in an emerging and developing country, Turkey. The goal of the project is to provide capital to migrant Anatolian women entrepreneurs for their socio-economic empowerment and equality. Micro Anatolia also trains and consults with these entrepreneurs in financial literacy, budgeting, planning, and marketing... I feel very fortunate that we (the Micro Anatolia team, the Anatolian entrepreneurs, and I) were able to reach our targets: We have reduced some effects of poverty, facilitated the integration of migrant mothers and young women in the squatter settlements of the city, and developed women’s self-employment and entrepreneurship potential. The ultimate impact has been the socio-economic empowerment of the migrant women and indirectly, their children.

Currently, my Lang Project is still growing. Micro Anatolia has created jobs for more than 50 women. These entrepreneurs’ interests and businesses range from selling traditional Turkish embroidery and handicraft, painting traditional artwork, designing jewelry and accessories, and selling women and children’s clothing, to running a bakery, a beauty salon, and a child care center. Some of the women make telkari (also known as filigree), a type of traditional Turkish jewelry made from delicate silver lace metalwork. Filigree has an old history in this region and filigree artisans are very much respected because of the intricacy of their work. Some of the artisan women I have been working with want to sell their products not only in Turkey, but also abroad. My next step may involve designing an international e-business model for their products. I am very much looking forward to this challenge! When I look back upon my Lang Project journey, I feel extremely fortunate as I had the opportunity to work with amazing, strong women.

(Cont’d on P2)
CLASS NOTES

Tianyu (Tom) Liu ’12 worked for two years at The Advisory Board Company in Washington, D.C., where he conducted research on health system strategy and care delivery improvement in the U.S. This past summer, Tom led a group of high school students to experience China with The Experiment in International Living. This fall, Tom started medical school at the University of Pennsylvania, Perelman School of Medicine. He is excited to share that his Lang Project, *Screening and Extended Eye-Care Referral (SEER)*, has transitioned fully to the leadership of local volunteers! They recently secured a 10,000 RMB grant and will be expanding the program in this its fourth year.

Tristan Reader ’89 visited campus in spring 2014 with his niece during her college visit at Swarthmore. While a student at Swarthmore, Tristan worked with the Tucson Refugee Support Group in Arizona and produced a report, *No Human Being Is Illegal: A Study of the Sanctuary Movement*. He writes, “My experience as a Lang Scholar was formative and has had ongoing impacts throughout my professional and personal life. Indeed, I have worked in the community development field for nearly 25 years, the last 18 of which I have spent working on the Tohono O’odham Nation in Southern Arizona. As Co-Founder of Tohono O’odham Community Action (www.toca-online.org), I have been fortunate enough to be part of the one of the most effective and recognized community-based Native American organizations in the country.”

My Lang Project also informed my academic and career trajectory. After I launched *Micro Anatolia*, I started to cooperate with the Turkish branch of a leading microfinance institution, Grameen, founded by the Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus. My work with Grameen provided me the opportunity to get field experience in the development sector. I have particularly focused on microfinance, microinsurance, and social finance policy research. While there I also contributed to a draft law on microfinance sector and regulation in Turkey. I have assisted the CEO of Grameen Turkey, a former member of the Parliament, and the management team. I also acted as a mediator in a due diligence process with international donors and sustainable, social finance investors.

After my experience with national and international financial institutions in the development field, I decided to delve into the finance part of similar projects like *Micro Anatolia* and learn more about “triple bottom line” (social, environmental, and financial performance) investing and the impact investing field. With this in mind, I pursued a Master’s in Accounting and Finance at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) after my graduation from Swarthmore. My MSc allowed me to have a comprehensive view of development economics, finance, accountability, and risk management. Now I have a much clearer vision of what *Micro Anatolia* could look like in the future.

I have been very lucky to have the support of Mr. Lang, who made time for me whenever I needed advice regarding my Lang Project (or other life decisions!) and everyone at the Lang Center. After my graduation from Swarthmore, I had the wonderful opportunity to co-teach microfinance as part of a directed reading course called Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship along with the Lang Advisor, Dr. Jennifer Magee. I am greatly thankful to my mentors and advisors (including economics professors, Dr. Erin Bronchetti and Dr. Mark Kuperberg, and Wharton professors Dr. Ulku Oktem and Dr. Paul Kleindorfer) who have seen my Lang Project and me develop during this journey.
**CLASS NOTES**

Lang Scholar Sneha Shrestha ’11 (middle, above) writes, that she “reunited with my two besties from Swarthmore” (Lang Scholar Ecem Erseker ’11 also above on the right) at her wedding reception at the Radisson Hotel in Kathmandu, Nepal on Day 3 of 8 days of a Nepali wedding!

Anna Torres ’07 gave a talk, “The Circular Landscapes of Dvoyre Fogel: A Reading and Discussion on Modern Yiddish Translation,” at Swarthmore College in April 2014. As a Lang Scholar, Anna founded the Chester Mural Arts Collective, a creative, free, and collaborative art-based learning process for harnessing the voices of youth to reclaim and beautify broken spaces through outdoor mural painting in the City of Chester, PA. She and the project participants created five murals together. Anna has continued her work as a community muralist in Roxbury, Massachusetts (pictured below) as well as the San Francisco Bay Area.

Molly Weston ’10 recently joined A Better Balance, a New York-based nonprofit that fights for workplace flexibility for low-income workers, as a Liman Fellow. Her work focuses on New York City’s new Earned Sick Time Act.

---

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS**

**GET CONNECTED: JOIN LANG SCHOLARS ON LINKEDIN!**

In 2012, Ana Chiu ’06 created a LinkedIn group for both current Lang Scholars and alumni. Search “Lang Scholars Alumni Network” and join us!

**GIVE BACK: VOLUNTEER TO REVIEW LOS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS**

The Lang Opportunity Scholarship Program continues to be one of the most competitive on campus: Each year, we receive approximately 25-30 applications from high achieving, first-semester sophomores for up to six places in the LOS Program cohort. And each year, Lang Scholar Alumni offer important insights into the applicants and their projects. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the selection process by reading and evaluating the applications of aspiring Lang Scholars. Applications are due on Monday, November 3; evaluations of those applications are due by Friday, November 21. If you’d like to participate this year, please email imagee1@swarthmore.edu for more information.

**LANG SCHOLAR ALUMNI REUNITE**

Pictured above, Hansi Wang ’09, Kat Lam ’11, Ariel Finegold ’13, Lang Scholar Advisor; Jennifer Magee, Tom Liu ’13, Smitha Arekapudi ’99, Lang Center Executive Director; Joy Charlton, and Lourdes Rosado ’85 gathered at the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility for an outdoor reception during Alumni Weekend (June 2014) following a panel discussion, “What I Learned from Trying to Change the World.” This discussion featured: Nick Martin ’04, founder and president of TechChange; Kevin F.F. Quigley ’74, country director, Thailand, Peace Corps; Lourdes Rosado ’85, associate director of Juvenile Law Center; and Carolyn Rouse ’87, professor of anthropology, Princeton University. Joy Charlton, executive director of the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility and professor of sociology, served as moderator. Listen to the panel here: [http://www.swarthmore.edu/all-alumni-reunion-weekend/listen-lectures](http://www.swarthmore.edu/all-alumni-reunion-weekend/listen-lectures).
SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

If you have a “class note,” “dogfish story,” picture, or other information you’d like to share, please send an email to jmagee1@swarthmore.edu. *Dogfish Stories* is e-published during spring break (mid-March) and fall break (mid-October) each year. Submission deadlines are March 1 and October 1, respectively.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**THE LANG SCHOLARS PRESENT:**
**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN ACTION** •
Friday, March 28 • 12:30 – 2:00 PM • Scheuer Room

For over 30 years, Eugene Lang ’38 has supported over 100 Lang Scholars and their social action projects in many communities around the world. Join the LOS Class of 2015 as they describe the innovative projects they developed in response to significant social problems. Summaries of current Lang Scholar projects can be found here: [http://www.swarthmore.edu/lang-center-for-civic-and-social-responsibility/lang-scholar-profiles.xml](http://www.swarthmore.edu/lang-center-for-civic-and-social-responsibility/lang-scholar-profiles.xml)

WASTE NOT

Here in an excerpt from her final report, Morgan Bartz ’14 reflects on her Lang Project, “Developing Sustainable Communities: Rethinking and Redesigning Waste Management Systems in Delaware County, Pennsylvania,” and its connection to her academic work and personal development.

"The mission of my project was to bring to light and mitigate the environmental health and social impacts of traditional waste management in Delaware County, Pennsylvania. I sought to achieve this mission by creating and piloting an environmental education curriculum for elementary students that situated natural resources and waste as an environmental and social justice concern, as well as a zero waste guide for event planners and residents of Delaware County. The goal was that these different initiatives and forms of education around zero waste would initiate critical questioning of Delaware County’s current waste management system and would help contribute to greater county momentum to reduce dependence on incineration as the primary method for managing waste. The curricular project and training also provided an opportunity to implement improvements to waste management design within schools and at events, leading to tangible reductions in the amount of waste generated in these contexts.

...I was able to conduct an in-depth assessment of my project using student work, my own observations, and literature, in the form of my thesis, which delved into a deeper examination of the design of my lesson plans and the way in which they actually played out in the classroom. These forms of assessment ultimately helped me to evaluate my project, as well as process the ways in which my thoughts on social change have transformed over the years. As a written document, my thesis has the potential to help others in carrying out similar projects and foreseeing some of the problems I encountered.”