

Social Entrepreneurship Spanning the Americas

During the Spring 2023 semester, Dr. Teresa Harrison's Entrepreneurship & Small Business Management students engaged in a social entrepreneurship project with the women of the Shipibo Tribe in Peru. This tribe makes most of their money from their artisan goods, jewelry, tapestries, key chains, and purses, which are quality, hand crafted products. The project in this course was to assist the Peruvian women with generating sales to provide capital for them to expand their business and to attract a client base to purchase their handmade products in order to sustain themselves. This was a wonderful opportunity for the students to learn what it might be like to be an entrepreneur.

The goal of this social entrepreneurship project was primarily to learn about entrepreneurship while gaining an appreciation for the culture and products made by the women of the Shipibo Tribe in Peru. Each student team was tasked with (a) addressing a technology challenge (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, website), along with (b) determining a specific way to earn money for the women (bake sale, pop up sale of the Peruvian goods, etc.). Essentially, the students were innovating through service.

Yesenia Alcala, PhD student at UIW, who Dr. Harrison met through Sister Martha Ann Kirk, was the primary contact with the Shipibo women. Two times during the semester the class coordinated a Zoom meeting with the Shipibo Tribe Leader, Karina, to learn more about the tribe and their needs.

From initial discussions, the students learned that for the Shipibo women, their culture is expressed through crafts, and their main goal was to ensure that their tribal identity continues with the following generations. Specifically, the Shipibo women stated they were working toward improvements in (a) housing, (b) health care, and (c) education for their children. The money raised was sent to the Shipibo tribe and resulted in helping them purchasing additional supplies as well as to repair drainage issues they were experiencing.

In addition, they want to generate a positive impact on women through empowerment and developing various capacities to continue to create and make artisan items & help their tribal sisters (other Shipibo women) develop these skills. They strive for a better quality of life.

Each student team established a team name and presented the way(s) in which they would achieve their goals of service for the Shipibo women:

Team 1: PerUnited – Objective: To create a sustainable e-commerce website and sell Shipibo products in pop up events and to spread cultural awareness. This team helped raise money for the Shipibo women by baking and selling muffins to attract customers and generated awareness of the Shipibo women. Members: Mackenzie McMurtrie, Hector Olivares, Estephania Garcia Rodriguez, and Nick Salinas.

Team 2: PerUnion – Objective: To bring exposure of the Shipibo tribe to others and to raise funds to help achieve their goals by bringing their artisan goods to a new market. This team brewed Peruvian coffee to be sold with the Shipibo tribe's goods. Members: Ryan Kang, Christopher Moreno, Tommy Reyes, Angelyna Rodbuab, Minh Anh Tran.

Team 3: Cardinal Cookies – Objective: To support the Shipibo Tribe and bring awareness about the diverse culture of the Shipibo tribe. This team participated in a pop up shop selling cookies and lemonade. Members: Tyrese Brown, Han Nguyen, Ricky Rich, Cody Trevino, Lauren Wood.

Team 4: Shipibo Outreach Group – Objective: Dedicated to help the Shipibo Tribe grow their business and generate awareness via social media. This team sold the artisan goods at a pop-up sidewalk sale. Members: Bella Fellows, Nathan Keller, Mary Malone, Ashton Moser.

Additionally, some of the students were so passionate about the Shipibo women and their livelihood that later in the semester during our individual small business pop-up storefront, these students donated their own money earned from their individual small business sales.

The class sold authentic handmade beaded necklaces, bracelets, purses, hand embroidered table clothes, tapestries, and so much more! Students also created the following social media pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/shipibotribeperu>

Instagram @shipibotribeperu

TikTok @shipibotribeperu

Although the class has now concluded, everyone is welcome to purchase goods or make a donation by contacting Yesenia Alcala at yalcala@student.uiwtx.edu. Learn more about the women of the Shipibo tribe here: <http://bit.ly/3J2ctQk>. Questions about our project? Please contact Dr. Teresa Harrison at teresa.harrison@uiwtx.edu.

The pictures below are of the women of the Shipibo tribe and the UIW HEBSBA students participating in a pop-up sales event to benefit the Shipibo women.



UIW HEBSBA Students raise money
for the women of the
Shipibo Tribe in Peru

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Entrepreneurship & Small Business
Management

