



*Carlos Moreno in the 1970s*

## Celebrating our first client

A small pile of spices was the only visible asset Carlos Moreno had when he became Opportunity International's first loan client in 1971. Carlos and his wife ran a spice delivery service out of their home, purchasing spices wholesale and grinding them by hand.

Less than two years after receiving his initial loan to purchase an electric grinder, Carlos had expanded his business to sell 52 different spices, teas and medicinal herbs, employing 11 people in his store in Colombia.

Ten years later, Carlos sold his business and became a business consultant and pastor, encouraging impoverished people to join Opportunity. With a simple loan, many of the women in his church were able to build small businesses and provide for their families. Today, at 81, Carlos volunteers his time with a local nonprofit that serves people living in poverty in rural Colombia.

## Join our celebration

Visit [opportunity.org/40](http://opportunity.org/40) to find out all the ways you can participate in our 40th anniversary campaign, including:

- **Fund** a loan
- **Buy** holiday gift cards
- **View** highlights from our 40 years
- **Sign up** for our annual conference at [opportunity.org/conference](http://opportunity.org/conference)



*Opportunity clients perform a welcoming song at the grand opening of Opportunity DRC.*

## Opportunity opens in DRC

On May 19, Opportunity International celebrated its grand opening in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where only 1% of the people have access to basic financial services that could help them work their way out of poverty. This marks an important milestone in the expansion of Opportunity's community-level banking approach.

Governor of the Central Bank of Congo Jean-Claude Masangu Mulongo, speaking at the grand opening, said, "The establishment of Opportunity International's network of microfinance institutions in the DRC is an important step toward improving the economic prosperity of our citizens."

With an estimated population of 71 million, the DRC is the third largest country in Africa, and among the 20 most populous countries in the world. Within its first three years of operation, Opportunity DRC plans to mobilize \$4.7 million from 24,000 depositors and disburse more than 47,000 small business loans. During that period, Opportunity DRC also expects to add four full-service branches.

The grand opening ceremony in the capital of Kinshasa was attended by local government officials and dignitaries, Opportunity representatives from the DRC and the U.S., as well as supporters and clients. Additional presenters included UNDP Country Director Adama Guindo; Opportunity DRC CEO Gilbert Lagaillarde; Opportunity Board Member Kadita "A.T." Tshibaka; and Opportunity Africa Chairman Francis Pelekamoyo.

Many dedicated partners are making it possible for Opportunity International to expand into the DRC. Among those supporters is retired NBA All-Star Dikembe Mutombo. "To eradicate poverty, we all need to do our part. I believe that microfinance banking and access to savings accounts is the only way that Africa will emerge from poverty," Dikembe said. "As a Congolese native, I am proud to see Opportunity International's dream of bringing a bank to the DRC become a reality and a source of hope for the working poor."

*(continued on page 5)*



## CEO Corner

with  
Bill Morgenstern

In the Christian faith, the number 40 has special significance. Moses was on the mountain for 40 days. Jesus fasted for 40 days. Lent is 40 days of prayer and reflection.

Forty is no less significant for Opportunity International as we celebrate this, our 40th year of bringing financial services to people working their way out of poverty in the developing world. And the highlight of our celebration is the landmark opening of the first Opportunity bank in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Our expansion into the DRC is due in large part to a \$2.5 million grant from the UN Capital Development Fund's (UNCDF) MicroLead program, a fund that assists financial service providers in expanding into the world's least developed countries. In addition to many other corporate and foundation partners, a group of individuals known as the "Balami Team" met for over two years to plan fundraising events, provide prayer support and give of their own financial resources. This broad base of support is enabling us to bring affordable access to savings accounts, business loans and training to the Congolese people.

While few of us are able to contribute at corporate and foundation levels, EVERYONE can come on board and join us in providing hope and opportunity to impoverished people. Visit [opportunity.org/africa](http://opportunity.org/africa) to see how a gift of \$50 can help farming clients obtain better quality seed to grow more food. Today, with the famine in East Africa, nearly three million people are starving and another 10 million face the threat of hunger every day. So please give at whatever level you can...but do give.

Our 40 years of work on behalf of people living in poverty, including the opening of our bank in the DRC, would not have been possible without your support. From all of us at Opportunity International, we extend our deepest thanks.

## Supporting rural farmers

The John Deere Foundation recently approved a \$2.5 million grant to support Opportunity's agricultural finance program, which will extend a full range of financial services and crop-specific loans to smallholder farmers in five countries in Africa.



*Support from the John Deere Foundation helps us provide financial services to cocoa farmers like these in Ghana.*

"We are impressed with the progress that Opportunity International has made in increasing access to financial services for African farmers, food processors and retailers," said John Bustle, vice president, John Deere Foundation. "Likewise, we are excited and optimistic about Opportunity's ongoing efforts to create a sustainable framework for enhanced food security through increased food production, food availability at local markets and family income to purchase food."

The John Deere Foundation grant will help Opportunity International achieve its objectives to introduce 450 new banking access sites, extend agricultural loans to over 500,000 new clients, including 95,000 farmer clients, and open 1.4 million interest-bearing savings accounts, with 950,000 of those in rural areas. Plans are also in place to hire 200 agricultural loan officers in the next three years.

With the addition of the John Deere Foundation's support, half of Opportunity's \$37 million rural outreach program is now funded. Supporters are encouraged to help fully fund this initiative to end hunger in Africa.

## Involving employees



*Opportunity supporter Kristin Henry (right) stands with Filipino loan client Gumersinda Igot, who makes shell chandeliers.*

Opportunity International has a great relationship with employees from the investment management firm T. Rowe Price. Among the many supporters at the company's headquarters in Baltimore, Md., are seven members of the Opportunity International Board of Governors, as well as Opportunity Board Member Mark Vaselkiv. Mark is lead portfolio manager for Global High Yield Strategy. He and his wife, Kathy, have been Governors for 25 years.

The T. Rowe Price Associates Foundation has given grants to

Opportunity and offers ongoing support through an employee matching gift program. In addition, employees have hosted luncheons for Opportunity's international visitors.

Ted Wiese, a portfolio manager in the company's Fixed Income Group, and his wife, Mary Jo, have supported Opportunity since attending a small meeting in Mark's home in 1990, and have been Governors since 2005. Todd Henry, emerging markets equity portfolio specialist, recently took an Insight Trip to the Philippines with his wife, Kristin, and their three children. Visit their trip fundraiser at [opportunity.org/give/fundraisers/henryfamilyinasia](http://opportunity.org/give/fundraisers/henryfamilyinasia).

## Bonded laborers find financial freedom in India

In Chennai, India, Opportunity's collaboration with International Justice Mission (IJM) provides previously bonded women laborers with the financial tools and social support systems to gain financial freedom. Bonded labor is widely recognized as a form of slavery. Typically, the duration of the "contract" is unspecified, keeping bonded laborers working indefinitely, sometimes up to 18 hours a day.

"Many of these women had inherited bonded labor from their fathers," said Sharon Sangeetha, IJM's assistant manager of client development. "Their only world was the rice mill. They don't even know who their relatives are."

With their own businesses, stable employment and built-up savings, Opportunity/IJM clients can reduce their risk of future victimization. Sharon said, "They understand that we are here for them...and for many, it is their first experience of feeling valued."



Sharon Sangeetha (left) with freed laborers



Willow Creek Community Church is helping bring mobile banks to underserved Malawians. Photo by Zsofia Molnar

## Willow Creek partners with Malawi

Families in Chitipa, a town in a remote area of Malawi, are receiving Opportunity International financial tools and training to end the cycle of poverty through a partnership with Willow Creek Community Church in suburban Chicago. The church serves up to 170,000 people in Chitipa with programs focused on finance, education, clean water, and HIV/AIDS care.

"What Opportunity provides, more than all the organizations we work with, is that sustainable transition path where local people can move ahead without dependency on foreign investment," says Willow Creek's John Forbes, director, Africa Operations, Global Connections. "We look to Opportunity to be the transition point where local community members take ownership of their financial situation and attain freedom and joy."

So far, Opportunity Malawi has provided a banking kiosk and two mobile banks in Chitipa. The goal is to provide over 10,000 households with access to savings accounts and loans.

## HIGHLIGHTING GLOBAL STAFF



### Gilbert Lagaille CEO, DRC

Born in Mauritius, Gilbert came to Opportunity DRC in August 2010 from Banque Commerciale du Rwanda, where he served as head of retail banking and operations. "I was very impressed by the way Opportunity Rwanda was operating and the technology they were using," says Gilbert.

Gilbert's most memorable day as CEO was the disbursement of the bank's first loan in January 2011. "It was the culmination of all our efforts to bring Opportunity DRC to life and reality," he says, "a moment of great joy and pride."

Gilbert has also found Opportunity to be a good fit with his values. "I am happy to work for an organization that isn't driven by the bottom line, and where everything is people-centered with a strong focus on Christian principles."



### Sam Chandar CEO, India

Sam was born in Coonoor in South India's Blue Mountains, and spent his youth in Coimbatore, a major industrial and educational center. Sam joined Opportunity in March 2011 after 25 years of professional management and leadership experience at a variety of organizations, including in the areas of corporate social responsibility and sustainability.

"As a Christian," he says, "Opportunity is the best of both worlds, a place where I can use head and heart in good measure."



## Smart Giving

with Chuck Day

### Charlie Todd's ultimate gift

When I first met Charlie Todd in spring 2004, he had achieved a unique standing at Opportunity. Legend had it that aside from our founder, Al Whittaker, Charlie was the first person to provide funding for our fledgling microfinance organization back in the early 1970s. He had been a successful businessman, had lost his first wife to cancer and remarried in 2002 (at the age of 85) and continued to go on Insight Trips into his 80s.

Charlie had just turned 87 when I met him. He was sharp as a tack and couldn't wait to share his plan with me. Charlie had built a beautiful Retreat Center on his property outside of St. Louis. As we walked the grounds, he told me that his goal was to give Opportunity \$1 million through his estate. Charlie had been generous to Opportunity for 30 years, but he viewed this final gift as his magnum opus, his crowning achievement to help the world's most impoverished people.

Through the advice of his longtime attorney, Charlie established a special giving arrangement called a CRT (charitable remainder trust). He transferred highly-appreciated stock into the trust, and the trust provided him with a lifetime income stream, a current income tax deduction and a way to bypass the capital gains taxes on his stock. The amount left in the trust upon Charlie's passing would go directly to Opportunity. He was very pleased with this arrangement as it represented savvy financial stewardship of his stock and would provide a significant gift to Opportunity.

When Charlie Todd passed away in April of this year at the age of 94, his attorney notified us that the remainder value of Charlie's CRT exceeded \$1 million. Charlie Todd, if the applause of thousands of Opportunity staff, clients and supporters here on Earth can reach Heaven, we hope you enjoy it.

*If you have questions about any aspect of charitable giving or estate planning, please contact Chuck Day, director of gift planning services, at 630-242-4136 or at [cday@opportunity.org](mailto:cday@opportunity.org).*

## Get Involved

### Faith in action

Between Aug. 27 and Oct. 4, Ann Loar Brooks is walking the last 500 miles of the Christian pilgrimage, Camino de Santiago—from southern France, through the Pyrenees and across northern Spain. Her mission: to raise awareness about Opportunity and donations of \$15,000 to support the Women's Opportunity Network Uganda campaign.

Last year, Ann and her husband, Steven Brooks, who live in Baltimore, Md., joined the Board of Governors in order to deepen their commitment to Opportunity.

Ann is carrying only 20 pounds on her back, and staying in rustic hostels. "Trusting that my daily needs will be met by the community along the Camino," Ann says, "I will be living a simple life of faith, not unlike the women who are members of Opportunity Trust Groups."

Ann has the generous support of the T. Rowe Price Associates Foundation, which will match any funds (up to \$10,000) donated by T. Rowe Price employees to her fundraiser.



*To pledge your support, visit [opportunity.org/give/fundraisers/AnnLoarBrooks](http://opportunity.org/give/fundraisers/AnnLoarBrooks).*



*Visit the couple's fundraiser at [opportunity.org/give/fundraisers/blender](http://opportunity.org/give/fundraisers/blender).*

### Better than a blender

When Opportunity Governors Ben Chelf and Kim Whittaker got engaged, they knew they wanted to do something a little different for their wedding. The couple put a link on their wedding website to the Better than a Blender fundraiser they created on opportunity.org. They are also offering a match for all donations so that their fundraiser will make an even greater impact.

Ben and Kim encourage other couples to launch a fundraiser for their nuptials. "A wedding is a good time to think about how you're allocating your time as a couple," says Ben. "You're bringing two lives together, and this is a good opportunity to get off on the right foot, choosing what you want to value together."

To start your own fundraiser for a special occasion, go to [opportunity.org/fundraisers](http://opportunity.org/fundraisers).

## Opportunity opens in DRC

(story continued from cover)

Kadita "A.T." Tshibaka, who was born and raised in the DRC, and has been a driving force in bringing Opportunity International to his native country, said, "I lost my father when I was three years old, which left the burden of raising me, my brothers and sister, to my mother. To support our family, my mother became an entrepreneur. I cannot help but ask myself what she would have accomplished with just one small business loan from Opportunity."

Opportunity DRC is off to a strong start, having already exceeded 2011 outreach goals by 30%.

"We reached 2,000 clients after only five months of operations," he says. "Our first customers are now our best ambassadors." A second Opportunity DRC bank opened recently.



*St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church will be supporting the work of loan officers like Maria Carolina Martinez Robles (left) who serves as a trainer and mentor for the Hand of God Trust Group in Arjona, Colombia.*

## Minnesota, meet Colombia

Although St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church is more than 3,000 miles away, the Plymouth, Minn.-based church is steadily building a bridge to Colombia. Thanks to the faithful response of its members, St. Philip has pledged up to \$150,000 in support of Opportunity's work in Colombia, where eight million people live on less than \$2 per day.

The church's gift, which is part of a three-year capital and missions appeal, will allow Opportunity to expand its presence in Colombia, helping thousands of people to open their first savings accounts and increase savings levels.

Board of Governors Chair Mary Lynn Staley and her husband, Warren, also a Governor, appeared in a video shown to church members to encourage support for Opportunity Colombia. The church's executive pastor, Tim Westermeyer, and Opportunity International Governors Jim and Evonne Pedersen will lead an Insight Trip to Colombia on Feb. 12-18, 2012.

## 800 opportunities to give

This Thanksgiving, Robert Roddy, a financial advisor with Minneapolis-based QA Investment Services, is giving 800 Opportunity gift cards to key leaders at Deloitte & Touche, one of his company's top clients. Robert is a member of Kingdom Advisors, a national organization of Christian financial professionals that promotes the integration of faith and finance.

Last February, Robert used a complimentary gift card he received at Opportunity's exhibit at the Kingdom Advisors conference to invest in a client's grocery business in Ghana. "Opportunity came into my path, and I don't believe anything happens by mistake," Robert says. "I want to give my clients an opportunity to invest these monies and learn more about Opportunity International."



*The Roddy family*

## CALENDAR FOR 2011

### Opportunity International Conference

"Innovating to End Poverty"

Oct. 14-15

Register at [opportunity.org/events](http://opportunity.org/events)

### Insight Trips

COLOMBIA PRE-CONFERENCE Oct. 11-13

RWANDA Oct. 15-21

INDIA Oct. 21-29

GHANA EDUCATION FINANCE Oct. 21-28

### Global Updates for Governors

Conference calls with CEO Bill Morgenstern and special guests

12 noon-1 p.m. CST

Dial (866) 794-4960, passcode 326589, press 2

• Sept. 15

**MicroEnsure: A Powerful Safety Net** with Richard Leftley, MicroEnsure president

• Dec. 8

**Focus on Savings** with Dennis Ripley, senior vice president, international business development

For more information on the conference calls, contact Shelley Weiler at [sweiler@opportunity.org](mailto:sweiler@opportunity.org) or (630) 242-4131.



YAO – Denver Co-chairs Caitlin Andrews (left) and Monica Perez cut the ribbon at YAO-ZA!  
Courtesy Emily Elizabeth Photo. emilyelizabethphoto.com

## Launching in Denver

Last spring, around the country, YAO members planned many great events like Spring Swing, YAO – Los Angeles's swing dancing fundraiser, and YAO – Boston's Breakfast for Tanzania with author Roger Thurow. We are so excited to have a new chapter host another great event.

In mid-May, nearly 250 passionate, socially minded young professionals and entrepreneurs gathered at Denver's Colorado Arts Center for YAO-ZA!, the launch of YAO – Denver. Highlights of the celebration included dinner; live music from three bands; an art show featuring local artists like photographer Sam Scrofani; crafts from Opportunity Rwanda women clients for sale by Trading for Treasures; and a presentation by keynote speaker Daniel Ryumugabe, Opportunity Rwanda's transformational impact manager.

Guests had a great time learning about Opportunity International's work. Amy Steinhoff, event co-organizer and YAO member, commented, "This is the start of an exciting new globally minded community in Denver. We're so grateful for the community's support and can't wait to grow our chapter."

To view photos from this and other YAO events, go to [opportunity.org/blog](http://opportunity.org/blog).

## Training to turn passion into action

Dedicated YAO members are committed to learning about Opportunity's work in the developing world and growing YAO's chapters. This year, YAO hosted Ambassador Training events in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and New York.

These half-day gatherings enable young professionals to dive deeper into the microfinance industry, gain a greater understanding of Opportunity International's mission, learn how to mobilize friends and colleagues to sustainably end poverty, and build relationships with fellow YAO members. The trainings are a big step toward helping members leverage their passion for Opportunity's work into lasting, sustainable action.



YAO – DC works together on a team-building exercise at their Ambassador Training on April 2.



YAO member Taina Collazo holds up her medal after finishing the 2010 Chicago Half Marathon.

## Racing to end poverty

After YAO – Chicago's successful showing in last year's Chicago Half Marathon & 5K, they were excited to do it even bigger this year. In September, when members head to the starting line for the 15th annual event, they'll be joined by YAO members from Michigan and Minneapolis.

Opportunity staff and supporters have joined the YAO team, training all summer for the big event and getting together for motivational dinners and fun gatherings. To show your support, visit [opportunity.org/halfmarathon](http://opportunity.org/halfmarathon) and donate to an online race fundraiser.

Good luck to all the runners.

## Meet Roy and Ruth Rogers

Roy and Ruth were first introduced to Opportunity in the 1980s by co-founder Al Whittaker, who served with Roy on the board of the John Perkins Foundation for Racial Reconciliation.

After attending an Opportunity event in the mid-1990s, the California couple made a commitment to the organization. What appealed to Roy, an investment banker and venture capitalist, was what he describes as Opportunity's business model of making small loans and combining



Ruth and Roy Rogers met with Abena Aboagyewaa Nsiah, regional branch manager, Opportunity Ghana, during her visit to the U.S. earlier this year.

transformational programs that could make positive financial, spiritual and emotional changes for clients in poverty. Ruth, a retired school teacher who now teaches Sunday school, saw that by supporting women, children are taken care of as well.

Roy and Ruth say they also have confidence in Opportunity's fiscal and operational

management. "Opportunity is not only doing very good work, they're managing the store," she said. This story would not be complete, of course, without answering the question: Who is the "original" Roy Rogers—the Opportunity Governor, or the legendary cowboy singer? Roy is happy to clear up the matter. "The movie studio changed his name from Leonard Slye to Roy Rogers in 1938, when I was four years old." Roy says that sharing his name with the celebrity (who died in 1998) has been a wonderful experience. "Had there been any downside, I guess I could have changed my name to Leonard Slye."



Beth, Meg, Dick and Grant Gochnauer visit a client's business on the 2006 Nicaragua Insight Trip.

## Opportunity friend Dick Gochnauer retires

Opportunity International congratulates Dick Gochnauer on his recent retirement from United Stationers, where he served as CEO since 2002. In their six years as Governors, Dick and his wife, Beth, have hosted many Opportunity events, met with international staff, and helped attract new donors.

In May, United Stationers honored Dick at an event that included a tribute video featuring congratulatory remarks from CEO Bill Morgenstern and Abena Aboagyewaa Nsiah, regional branch manager, Opportunity Ghana. Long admired for his generosity to charities and social causes, Dick was presented with the first annual Dick Gochnauer Legacy of Giving Award. As evidence of that legacy, United Stationers employees at the local Field Support Center in suburban Chicago have supported three Ghanaian Trust Groups, and the company plans to generate nationwide support to fund several hundred more client loans in the near future.



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## OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE INNOVATING TO END POVERTY OCTOBER 14-15, 2011 • SAN FRANCISCO

Meet and be inspired by microfinance innovators and thought leaders:

- Daryl Collins, researcher and author, *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*
- Reeta Roy, president & CEO, The MasterCard Foundation
- John Ortberg, author and pastor, Menlo Park Presbyterian Church
- Opportunity staff from the DRC, Kenya and Malawi

Register now at [opportunity.org/events](http://opportunity.org/events).  
Then invite your friends to join you.

*Pictured left: Talekeleni Kagaso, Opportunity Malawi client*



Opportunity International

2122 York Road, Ste. 150, Oak Brook, Illinois 60523



(From left) Opportunity DRC client André Mbongo and Loan Supervisor Patrick Kamunga

## Impacting lives in the DRC

The opening of Opportunity’s first bank in the Democratic Republic of Congo in January has already had an impact on André Mbongo and Patrick Kamunga. André is a client who sells travel bags in the Kinshasa market; Patrick is his first loan officer. André, 35-years-old and a father, says that loans and training from Opportunity have enabled him to gain more notice—and sales—in the market. He has used his loans to buy a variety of suitcases and now plans to purchase luggage from Japan.

André also says that Opportunity’s business management training has helped him become more organized. “I used to work without writing anything down,” he said. “Since my training, I bought a book in which I note all my expenses and revenues. I now feel more comfortable.”

Patrick was a loan officer for another microfinance institution when he heard about Opportunity. “I wanted to work for an organization that promotes Christian values,” says Patrick, and found Opportunity to be a good fit. “My motivation is to be a player in the fight against poverty.”

Recently, Patrick was named “best employee of the quarter” and was promoted from loan officer to loan supervisor.

## OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL’S VISION

**Our vision** is a world in which all people have the opportunity to provide for their families and build a fulfilling life.

**Our belief** is that small-scale entrepreneurs can be big change agents in overcoming global poverty.

**Our mission** is to empower people to work their way out of chronic poverty, transforming their lives, their children’s futures and their communities.

**Our method** is to provide microfinance services, including lending, savings, insurance, and transformational training, to people in need. To do this, we build and work through sustainable, local microfinance institutions.

**Our motivation** is to respond to Jesus Christ’s call to love and serve the poor.

### Get involved

**Board of Governors** • [opportunity.org/board-of-governors](http://opportunity.org/board-of-governors)  
**Women’s Opportunity Network** • [opportunity.org/won](http://opportunity.org/won)  
**Young Ambassadors for Opportunity** • [opportunity.org/yao](http://opportunity.org/yao)

### Join the conversation

[opportunity.org/blog](http://opportunity.org/blog) • [twitter.com/opportunityintl](https://twitter.com/opportunityintl) • [facebook.com/opportunityintl](https://facebook.com/opportunityintl)

### Fund a microloan at [opportunity.org/give](http://opportunity.org/give)

Choose an entrepreneur to support • Host a fundraiser

If you prefer to receive *IMPACT* via email, please contact [getinfo@opportunity.org](mailto:getinfo@opportunity.org).

