

TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES
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Co-op America People's Choice Award for Green Business of the Year

We are honored and pleased to receive the 2005 People's Choice Award for Green Business of the Year. Thank you to Co-op America for organizing this award and for generating widespread interest in green business. And a big thank you to all the people who voted for Ten Thousand Villages.

We would like to dedicate this award to the people who are part of our Ten Thousand Villages family all around the world. We work with thousands of talented artisans in developing countries who put all of their creative energy into producing beautiful and useful products. We strive to provide vital, fair income to artisans by marketing their handicrafts and telling their stories in North America. Artisans work hard to earn a decent living and they work hard to use their resources wisely. We are inspired by the resourcefulness of people like the artisans at Bombolulu near Mombasa, Kenya, many of whom are physically disabled, who fashion recycled metal cans into beautiful jewelry. Women who are part of the Women's Multipurpose Co-op in Baguio, the Philippines, led by Mrs. Epifania Daoey, collect everyday newspapers and magazines and remake them into fantastic placemats and baskets. Woodcarvers near the traditional woodcarving town of Saharanpur in India are planting tens of thousands of sheesham trees in an effort to ensure that their children will be able to carry on the family tradition of carving. We in North America have a lot to learn from artisans like these who have found ways to turn waste materials into useful products and who are taking care of the environment around them in order to ensure a good future for their families and communities.

We also are very thankful to the many volunteers and staff who work in Ten Thousand Villages retail stores and festival sales all over North America. They contribute their time and talent to help secure a better future for artisans by selling their products and telling their stories. By selling artisan products they are helping artisans to earn a living and giving them hope for the future. By telling artisan stories they are enlightening customers and challenging them to spend their money responsibly.

Ten Thousand Villages asks people to "Shop Fair Trade, Invest in Your World". We are honored to be recognized as a "Green Business" and hope that this will enable us to talk to even more people in North America and challenge them to shop fair trade and invest in their world. After all, the world belongs to all of us and we need to encourage each other to take care of it and all of the people who live on this world.

Doug Dirks
Public Relations Specialist
Ten Thousand Villages

November 4, 2005