

Kiche Kwei,

iEmergence (indigenous Emergence), an initiative supported within the mission of My People International (MPI), is rooted in the idea that each group of indigenous peoples has been given a unique culture by the Creator through which to express themselves. However, due to the devastating effects of colonization, these people, along with their traditions and cultures, have been marginalized, their voices often silenced, and their values and worldview ignored, if not altogether threatened.

As iEmergence (iE), we seek to create pathways which will enable indigenous people, worldwide, to reclaim and redeem that which was originally created as good and beautiful. Through the reclamation of traditional knowledge and the integration of the new, we desire to see social, spiritual, economic, and political transformation with indigenous people and their communities.

iEmergence is composed of three elements. The first element is regional gatherings of indigenous young people. The gatherings, emphasizing cultural affirmation and exchange, will serve as a means to identify community aspirations and need in the emerging generations. The regional focus will also provide the foundation for a social and cultural networking strategy supplemented by the growing use of technology-driven social networking platforms.



The second element is called Osmosis. Osmosis recognizes the lack of emerging indigenous leadership and, in part, assigns that lack to the loss of traditional leader recognition and development. Historically, learning to lead took place as younger leaders engaged with mentors in the day-to-day tasks of leading a community and family. Many of these pathways are gone or have become dysfunctional. Osmosis seeks to restore them through a “coaching model” of learning with indigenous mentors – leaders in community, business and sustainable living practices. The basics of the Osmosis learning experience has been developed using Asset-based development tools – specifically in this instance, Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI is a development methodology that uses the power of conversation and story telling, to engage our imaginations of when things worked well. This, in turn, influences our present actions and future planning.

The third element is the establishment – by the leadership identified and trained in Osmosis as well as other partners in the initiative – of fully integrated, culturally enriched and locally specific economic development initiatives in the local and international marketplace. This will include cultural tourism (in-person, interactive, internet-driven), arts and crafts import and export and, locally sustainable food provision practices. Not only will the economic initiatives provide local incomes, they will also ensure the overall initiative is funded meaningfully and fairly in the long-term.

As part of the development of iEmergence, focused conversations took place in New Zealand, Canada, the USA and the Philippines, facilitated by three questions surrounding the nature of indigenous youth and young adults and their perspectives on

the Church – historic and future minded. The results from these conversations were recorded, transcribed, and developed into a paper that was presented by an iEmergence panel at the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies (NAITS) symposium in Langley, British Columbia in June of 2009.

Currently, follow-up conversations for North America have been planned (one just happening in Red Deer, Alberta as this Newsletter is going to print!). Please keep these conversations in prayer as we will be discussing how iEmergence develops its fit within Native North American contexts, so as to give voice to a wider range of emerging voices across North America. We hope to discuss and discern where they fit and what they would like to do in their own context and how that can be facilitated by iEmergence.

iEmergence has begun the process of partnering with local organizations in the Philippines and has launched the preliminary Osmosis process!

This initial course was six days in duration, partnering with Tribal Missions Foundation International (TMFI) and was focused in one particular tribal community. There were 12 participants in the course, and our aim was to hear the stories of the community and relate them to our own lives. This was not envisioned as a full Osmosis process but rather a pathway towards the complete process. It was also envisioned as necessary relationship building in the community. The participants enjoyed the experience and were excited to learn more of the process. Four of the students will be continuing training with TMFI. Here are some comments from the participants:



“We were participants in the trial run of the Osmosis Project. There couldn’t have been a better opportunity for me to look closely at my reflection than this.”

“The experience forced me to evaluate the cost I’m paying in pursuing my dreams. Davao has reminded me of how beautiful it is to be with family.”

“It reminded me of what was really important in life... Today I look forward to opening my heart and giving it more to people. I look forward to engaging in more conversations to build relationships and out of genuine interest. I look forward to spending more time with my family, making sure I don’t grow apart from them and making myself a part of their lives and them a part of mine. I look forward to loving God and others without holding back for myself, and giving not because I’m supposed to but because I want to.”

“After hearing these stories and seeing these things, I heard my heartbeat. God birthed dreams in my teacher heart.”

We continue to explore partnership opportunities in various indigenous communities throughout the Philippine Islands and have developed some great relationships and contacts. As part of that development, iEmergence will be offering an AI facilitators training in the Philippines during the month of November. We have invited Terry

LeBlanc to come and run facilitators training courses in Manila and in Davao, while also offering more specific and in-depth training and instruction to iEmergence staff here.

We are still in the process of discovering how iEmergence will look in New Zealand and continuing the relationship building with local organizations, groups and individuals who are interested in the iE vision.

We are planning to continue the conversations that we started at the NAIITS conference to engage the emerging generations in the questions that will define the future for us as indigenous peoples. These conversations will be locally hosted in various countries and then transcribed to upload onto a global blog site. This will allow for a cross-cultural discussion on the issues that are affecting our emerging generations in the world today. We hope that the connections that are made through this blog will also ignite partnerships between organizations and individuals all over the world to work together toward common goals.



Another opportunity that has surfaced for iEmergence is the invitation to be represented by Jennifer LeBlanc at a conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in October 2009. The name of the conference is "Gathering Around the Unhewn Stone." There, Jennifer will be addressing the topic of Traditional Knowledge and Post-colonialism. This will allow for a great opportunity to share an indigenous view of the issues that will be discussed and also to share the vision and goals of iEmergence. Please keep her in your prayers as she prepares and offers her presentation.

We are deeply appreciative of your interest and involvement with iEmergence. We would like to ask that you pray for us as we move forward with this vision with which we have been blessed. More specifically, we would ask that you be in prayer regarding the partnerships that are developing in the Philippines, as well as in New Zealand and other parts of the world. We are also in need of constant prayer for the staff and facilitators of iEmergence - specifically for clarity of vision, creativity, and guidance.

We are overjoyed to be a part of what Jesus is doing among the indigenous peoples of the world and we are honored to have you walking this journey alongside us!

Sincerely in Jesus,

Matt LeBlanc and the iEmergence team