

COUNCIL FEATURES

Project Iris inspires a community

BY NICOLE L. GILL, COUNCIL MAGAZINE

Last year, 925 million people worldwide suffered from hunger, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. That amounts to 13.1 percent of the global population not having enough to eat, the organization said.

It's those dramatic statistics that helped jump-start Project Iris Clothing.

"We wanted to create a different brand that would have a broad appeal to women, kind of geared toward conscious consumerism," said Scott Andersen, vice president of Project Iris and Cincinnati-based Ripple Junction.

A portion of each Project Iris sale goes to World Food Program USA, providing nutritious meals for new mothers and their children in poor areas of the world. World Food Program, a United Nations agency, is the largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide.

"We wanted to make a small contribution to make the world a slightly better place for those in dire need," Andersen said.

The focus on nutrition stemmed from the most basic of needs.

"People need to eat to survive," he said. "We were looking at it at the most basic level ... people need nourishment in order to make other changes in their lives."



The company's initial contribution to World Food Program provided meals for 12,500 mothers and children.

"Neil (Hoynes, president and CEO of Project Iris), my partner, and I have young kids and I think that played a part in it," Andersen said. "We wanted to share our success and help out where we can."

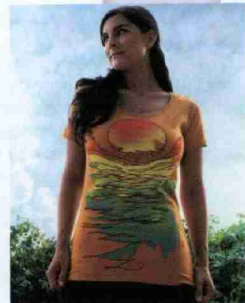
Central to the Project Iris line

are short- and long-sleeve shirts made of cotton and burnout fabric. Each garment, ranging in price from \$33 to \$53, is made in the United States with original graphic elements, such as florals and peacock feathers, adorning each shirt. All shirts are available at www.projectirisclimbing.com, spas and boutiques, Andersen said.

The Project Iris customer is a woman whose "beauty resides within ... (and) her ability to be empathetic to those who are less fortunate than she may be, and be willing to help them out when she can," he said.

Project Iris wants its customers to be a part of a like-minded community.

"Our goal is to bring people together and hopefully inspiring people to make a difference on their own in whatever form that takes," Andersen said.



COURTESY OF PROJECT IRIS CLOTHING

To support Project Iris and World Food Program: www.projectirisclimbing.com.

