

*Isis Initiative, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation that promotes healing, communication and connection through education and the arts. Our "Leah's Dream" project offers funding to young women who have the desire but not the resources to pursue a college education. We welcome your contributions to our global efforts. Tax-ID 26-2272670, 501 (c)(3)*

# Isis Initiative, Inc.

From the president:

## Celebrating our 10th anniversary

Cheryl Hatch, president

*In October 2007, I traveled to Mindanao in the Philippines to attend Leah B. Mamhot's graduation from LaSalle University in Ozamis City.*



Cheryl Hatch

*I had met Leah in Puerto Galera. I was on a diving vacation and she was*

*a waitress in the hotel restaurant. An ATV accident resulted in injuries that required surgery and days in recovery in the hospital. Leah was my companion, in accordance with Filipino culture, watching over me and keeping me company. I was moved by her generosity and kindness. I paid for Leah's college education, roughly \$2500 for four years.*

*When I traveled to her graduation, family and friends offered money and gifts for Leah to acknowledge her accomplishment. I realized a small amount of money from many dedicated individuals could make a big difference in women's lives.*

*In February 2008, I created the Oregon-based nonprofit, Isis Initiative, Inc. We are a small yet mighty volunteer*

*See LETTER, p. 2*

Scholarships: Leah's Dream Project

## We are sponsoring a student in Liberia



*Davidetta Forkpah is a sophomore at the Mother Patern College of Health Sciences, studying social work.*

Isis Initiative, Inc is sponsoring a sophomore at the Mother Patern College in Monrovia, Liberia.

Davidetta Forkpah is studying social work at the college, which also offers disciplines in nursing, laboratory technology and pre-med biology.

"I am so happy to have received a scholarship

from your organization," Davidetta wrote in a letter this summer. "I promise to perform to the best of my abilities in order to maintain this scholarship."

Isis Initiative President Cheryl Hatch connected with Sister Barbara through a journalist she was working with when Hatch was in Liberia covering the Ebola outbreak in 2014-2015.

*See LIBERIA, page 4*

## New decade, new name

Our president, Cheryl Hatch, has long loved Egypt, her people, history and mythology.

She chose our nonprofit's name based on the Egyptian goddess, Isis, who represents

a strong, powerful woman. In the stories and myths, Isis gathered what had been shattered and healed and breathed new life into it. She was—and remains—a beautiful metaphor for our

*See NAME, page 4*

# NEWS & UPDATES

Scholarships: Leah's Dream Project

## Azmina: empowering girls



Azmina Karim works from Bangladesh for ConnectHer, an NGO.

In 2015, we offered financial support to Azmina Karim so she could complete Master of Arts in Gender and Peace Building at the University for Peace in Costa Rica.

Now Azmina Karim is the program director at ConnectHer, an NGO based in Austin.

She works remotely from Bangladesh on different projects which focus on empowering girls and women globally.

Azmina got to work closely with Girls Global Education Fund, which assists girls with financial need in going back to school. Among her other projects, she also got to work with a Burmese migrant

school in Thailand, where, with the contribution of [ConnectHer](#), 40 students will be fed for one whole academic year. Not only that, the students also got a course on basic nutrition.

Azmina has a bachelor's in Asian Studies from Asian University for Women. She worked as a volunteer teacher at Minmahaw school, supported by a grant from ConnectHer.

Azmina's short film "Because I Am a Girl," a powerful indictment of domestic violence in Bangladesh, won the People's Choice Award at ConnectHer's Girls Impact the World Film Festival in 2013.

From the president:

*10 years later, we have good reasons to celebrate*

### **LETTER, from page 1**

organization, making a difference one donation and one woman at a time.

In February 2018, we'll celebrate our 10th anniversary. In our first 10 years, we've offered scholarships to women studying in the Philippines, Costa Rica and Sierra Leone. This year we've offered scholarships in Malaysia and Liberia. We couldn't have done it without your continued support and generosity.

Over the years, Leah has used her teacher's salary to pay for her nephew's education

and provide medical care for her beloved mother, Rosalia, who died three years ago. She expanded her family's cinderblock home, adding indoor plumbing. And she adopted a baby boy, Lanze Bree, who turned 5 years old this year.

This year Leah began studies for her master's degree in education. Earlier this year, the board voted to support her continuing education.

Sadly, in the 10 years since we founded

*I realized a small amount of money from many dedicated individuals could make a big difference in women's lives.*

Isis Initiative, Inc., the name ISIS became affiliated with a terrorist organization. Since we send funds to women overseas, the

board has decided we need to find a new name to avoid any confusion or potential harm by association for our scholarship recipients. If you have a suggestion for an inspired, powerful new name, please let me know.

*I wish you a blessed, joyful holiday season and a healthy, prosperous New Year.*

– Cheryl

# NEWS & UPDATES

Scholarships: news from the Philippines

## Maryjoy is now in her third year, Leah is getting her master's



Maryjoy Braggan Supang is in her third year at Governor Alfonso D. Tan College in Tangub City.

In June of 2015, Isis Initiative, Inc. offered a four-year scholarship to a student in the Philippines. Maryjoy Braggan Supang is now in her third year studying office administration at Governor Alfonso D. Tan College in Tangub City, and getting good grades. She hopes to graduate in March 2019.

Our "Leah's Dream" project offers funding to young women who have the desire but not the resources to pursue a college education. It was inspired by Leah Mamhot, who is now our liaison in the Philippines helping Maryjoy. On our 10th anniversary, we're glad to be able to help Leah get her master's degree in education, which she needs for her current teaching job. The cost is 7,000 Philippine pesos per semester, around \$138 in the U.S.

## A \$500 grant helps a student with living expenses

We were excited to send a one-time \$500 grant to Michelle Simon, a freshman with a full scholarship at The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus.



Michelle Simon

Michelle is majoring in International Communication Studies with Film and TV studies. She needed funds for living expenses and other miscellaneous costs. Michelle has a 3.8 GPA and is active in serving the Pakistani refugee community in Malaysia.

How you can help:

## Your donations go a long way

**\$50:** Help with expenses for our volunteer liaisons in the Philippines and Liberia.

**\$140:** A semester's tuition for Leah Mamhot's master's degree, in the Philippines.

**\$230:** One semester of college for Maryjoy in the Philippines.

**\$500:** Covers books and miscellaneous expenses for Michelle Simon, a Pakistani refugee with a full scholarship at The University of Nottingham Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur.

**Every little bit helps.** Can you give just **\$25** to go toward a young woman's education?

**Donate** with PayPal at: [isisinitiative.org](http://isisinitiative.org)

Board of directors

## Meet our newest board member, Amanda Spadaro

Born and raised near Pittsburgh, Amanda graduated Allegheny College with a bachelor of science in biology. She published three articles in scientific journals for her undergraduate research on population-level



Amanda Spadaro

DNA analysis and infectious disease transmission in amphibians. After graduation in 2015, she embarked on a career in journalism. She is a reporter for the Times Herald-Record in New York.

# Why we're changing our name

*NAME, from page 1*

***It was a difficult decision, since we don't like to see a woman's name and power appropriated and tarnished.***

work and mission.

Sadly, in the 10 years since we founded Isis Initiative, Inc., the name ISIS became affiliated, for some, with a terrorist organization.

Our board members decided that we must find a new name to avoid any confusion or potential harm by association for our scholarship recipients. This was a difficult decision, since we don't like to see a woman's name and power appropriated and tarnished; however, we send funds to women overseas and their wellbeing and success is our priority.

If you have a suggestion for an inspired, powerful new name, please let us know: [isisphotos@yahoo.com](mailto:isisphotos@yahoo.com)



Jeff Dahl CC2.0

***In the stories and myths Isis, the Egyptian goddess, gathered what had been shattered and breathed new life into it.***

# Meet our latest scholarship recipient

*LIBERIA, from page 1*

Davidetta is the oldest of three children growing up with their single parent mom. She says her mother sacrificed all of her time and resources to send Davidetta and her siblings to school.



**Davidetta Forkpah**

Davidetta's application seemed a good fit for our goal of supporting women so they can attend college in their own country and give back to their families and communities when they've completed their educations.

## Here's what we've been doing with your generous donations:

- Sponsoring a sophomore in social work in Monrovia, Liberia. (See p. 1)
- Helping Leah Mamhot get her master's degree. (See p. 3)
- Providing a full scholarship to a student studying office administration in the Philippines. (See p. 3)
- Provided financial support to a student to complete her Master of Arts in Gender and Peace Building in Costa Rica. (See p. 2)
- Provided funding for books and expenses to a Pakistani refugee with a full scholarship at The University of Nottingham in Kuala Lumpur. (See p. 3)
- Added a new board member (See p. 3).
- Changing our name. (See p. 1)

**YOU CAN HELP. PLEASE DONATE:**  
**WEB: [isisinitiative.org](http://isisinitiative.org)**  
**We are a 501(c)(3) organization.**  
**Donations are tax deductible.**  
**Tax-ID 26-2272670**

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