



# Society for International Development

Washington, D.C. Chapter

## **Innovator for India's Poor Diana Jue Receives 2014 Andrew E. Rice Award**

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**Washington, DC** – The Washington, DC Chapter of the Society for International Development (SID-Washington) presented the 2014 Andrew E. Rice Award for Leadership and Innovation by a Young Professional in International Development (the Rice Award) to Diana Jue. Jue is the Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of Essmart, a cutting edge distribution company that helps to put life-improving technologies into the hands of the neediest in the developing world.

Ms. Jue co-founded Essmart in southern India after witnessing the difficulties community development initiatives faced when their intended goals could not be reached due to poorly established distribution channels. Essmart helps to market products, including lighting, cooking, farming, low-cost electronics and solar lighting supplies, through a catalogue provided to retailers who also provide demonstrations with Essmart's sales executives. The social enterprise works through existing rural shop networks of mom and pop stores to put the latest innovations into the hands of the world's poorest. For instance, she has met with off-grid barbers and sari weavers who have used their solar lanterns to work longer hours, mothers who use their water filters, and farmers who use their irrigation technologies, among many others.

"I wholeheartedly believe that technology can change the world, but only if new products are both designed for and distributed to the 1 billion+ people who are generally overlooked by mainstream innovation and distribution channels," Diana explained. "Every day, I live and breathe this problem, and my creativity and efforts are devoted to creating a scalable and sustainable solution."

Ms. Jue has published numerous articles about her initiatives and challenges in several publications, including the *USAID Frontiers in Development*, *MIT Entrepreneurship Review*, and the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* blog.

Special recognition was also given to Nick Martin, Founder and President of TechChange, for his leadership in strengthening the abilities of professionals in development.

Alina Zyszkowski, Chair of the SID-Washington Rice Award Committee stated:

"We were extremely impressed with how Diana sought to resolve a problem she identified and is making a tangible difference in reaching the poorest populations of India. We also felt we should recognize Nick for his tremendous contributions to our field. The pool of applicants this year was particularly outstanding and we plan to feature their work in future SID-Washington events."

The Rice Award was established in 2003 by Andrew E. Rice and Robert Berg to honor leadership, innovation, impact, and commitment demonstrated by a young professional in international development. Mr. Rice was a founder and visionary of the Society for International Development, building it into a major global network and establishing the first newsletter and journal on international development. Mr. Rice also helped initiate a number of development

initiatives, including the U.S. Peace Corps. For more information on the Rice Award, its history, and the application process, please go to <http://www.sidw.org/andrew-e-rice-award>.

*SID-Washington is the premier professional association for individuals and institutions interested in international development. The mission of SID-Washington is to advance equitable development by bringing diverse constituencies together to debate critical ideas, policies, and practices. For more information, please visit us online at [www.sidw.org](http://www.sidw.org).*

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