



The Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award

The 4th Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award goes to a broad-based community project located on the eastern edge of Mexico City.

On Thursday July 22, the 4th Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award was presented to the Asamblea Comunitaria de Miravalle (Miravalle Community Council), a community-based project that runs a comprehensive set of cultural, health, environmental, educational and employment programs within a low-income neighbourhood on the outskirts of the city. Located in Iztapalapa borough and founded by indigenous people from different ethnic backgrounds who migrated to the city, Miravalle brings together a wide range of individuals as well as local and metropolitan organizations. They run a broad-based project that includes the collection and recycling of two tonnes of PET plastic per week (generating employment for 30 young people). In a vegetable garden they grow some of the food on offer at their low-budget canteen, which provides a balanced diet for 300 members of the community. They also offer a wide variety of sporting and cultural activities, such as art workshops, dance classes, a skateboarding court, and an educational program aimed at overcoming the technological gap. Among their first achievements was the transformation of a former waste dump into a public space for social interaction. The award, which includes a prize of US\$ 100,000, was presented at the Indianilla Cultural Centre, Mexico City, on July 22, 2010, in the presence of Marcelo Ebrard, Mayor of Mexico City, and Wolfgang Nowak, Director of the Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society (a non-profit organization).

The jury voted unanimously in favour of the project, praising the way the Miravalle Community Council creates virtuous cycles of participation and involvement, the way it recovers the notion of public space, helping to prevent urban and social problems in the future. "This project truly creates a sense of community and is building stakeholders in a city where that is so often lacking," said one member of the jury. Another commented that it gave hope and, despite being on the outskirts of the city, it was reinventing new ways of combining urbanity and community. "It is extraordinary," said one juror, how Miravalle produces a profound sense of ease despite being in an area that by all other social and economic parameters should be a ghetto."

Out of the 193 applications, the jury visited five projects. Two applicants, Centro Cultural Consejo Agrarista - CODECO (Cultural Centre Consejo Agrarista - CODECO) and Recuperando Espacios para la Vida (Recovering Spaces for Life), received a 'Special Mention' for their promotion of social cohesion and economic mobility with projects that started out as relatively small initiatives, but have since grown thanks to the initiators' considerable efforts. Mr. Tito Vidauri, Chief Country Officer of Deutsche Bank Mexico presented the US\$5,000 Special Mention prizes to the projects.

CODECO is a cultural centre that was founded by 30 gangs after they agreed on a truce to provide legalized graffiti and art as an alternative to drugs and crime. The initiative has made a major contribution towards the recovery of an entire neighbourhood in the former "no-go" area in Iztapalapa borough. Recovering Spaces for Life is a project in Santa Fe, an area of extreme socioeconomic contrasts. It is supported by the Iberoamericana University and focuses on the recovery of public spaces through different activities which create a sense of belonging, encourage the creation of productive projects and promote the leadership of community members.

Since March 2010, when the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award was launched in Mexico City, it has received submissions from right across the vast metropolitan area, from inner-city neighbourhoods to communities on the edge of the city. The applications reflect the vibrancy and creativity with which the residents of Mexico City are responding to the social and urban challenges of their city in the face of many difficulties. Coming from a wide range of social and geographical backgrounds, the projects showed that strong and diverse alliances are being built to improve the urban environment and the quality of life. The support of universities, local authorities and government programs, as well as the cooperation of different community organizations, have been important factors in the projects' success.

Apart from the large number of submissions, this 4th round of the Urban Age Award was distinguished by the high quality of the projects and the wide range of topics they relate to, such as education, culture, sanitation, local economies, the environment, public space and social integration, with the last three categories, in particular, being a common concern among the projects.

The jury, composed of seven international urban experts and local personalities with an in-depth knowledge of the different urban communities within the city, met in Mexico City from June 22 to 24, 2010, to elect the winner. The Mexican members of the jury were architect Jose Castillo as Jury Chair, actress Vanessa Bauche, political analyst and journalist Denise Dresser, architect Enrique Norten, and artist Betsabeé Romero. They were joined by the former Mayor of Washington DC Anthony Williams and Ricky Burdett, director of LSE Cities at the London School of Economics.

Wolfgang Nowak, director of Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society said, "These projects are Mexican ambassadors of good ideas and better solutions for cities, not just for Mexico City, but for all mega cities in the world. They are ambassadors of hope."

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award (DBUAA) was established in 2007 to encourage citizens to take initiatives to improve their cities.
- The award is organized by the Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society.
- It is a travelling award organized in parallel with the Urban Age Project, a joint initiative of the London School of Economics and Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society. In 2007, the award was given in Mumbai; in 2008 in São Paulo; and in 2009 in Istanbul.

Contact for Press:

Lorena Elizabeth Hernández
directora@sehablaespanolconsultoria.com
Phone + 52 55 85 96 06 42