



A Little Lather Goes a Long Way: Soap Hope and The PLAN Fund Announce New Anti-Poverty Partnership

Soap Hope, a leading online retailer of all-natural body care products, and the PLAN Fund, a Dallas-based microlending institution, announce a partnership in which Soap Hope will provide capital and business resources to support the mission of the PLAN Fund. Soap Hope's unique business model includes investing 100% of its profits each year into institutions that implement anti-poverty programs. The PLAN Fund develops small business entrepreneurs, especially women, through hands-on business training, business development services and micro-credit.

Dallas, TX ([PRWEB](#)) October 2, 2009 -- All-natural soap bars are this year's newest fuel for ending poverty. Soap Hope (www.soaphope.com), a leading online retailer of all-natural, high-quality soaps and body care products, and the PLAN Fund (www.planfund.org), a Dallas-based microlending organization, today announced their new partnership, in which Soap Hope will invest its annual profits to support the mission of the PLAN Fund.

Founded in 2008 by Dallas entrepreneurs Salah Boukadoum and Craig Tiritilli, Soap Hope operates under what the team calls the Good Returns model, in which a business invests resources in organizations that impact the lives of those in need. The businesses in turn receive a reciprocal benefit through increased community visibility and market awareness. Soap Hope is the first in what the founders expect will be a series of companies that embrace the Good Returns model.

"Good Returns redefines the relationship between private enterprise and charitable activity," explains Tiritilli. "We use every resource of the company - capital, communications channels to customers and the media, and Soap Hope's products themselves - to expand the capacity of nonprofits that are focused on ending poverty. We want to see every business deploy its resources this way - think of the progress we can make toward ending poverty worldwide."

Soap Hope deploys 100 percent of its profits through one-year, interest-free loans to local, national and global microlending programs that focus on women entrepreneurs in need. The PLAN Fund was chosen as one of this year's recipients; the investment will be used to grow the number of microloans made to aspiring, low income entrepreneurs in the Dallas area.

"The PLAN Fund is a natural fit for us," says Boukadoum, "They provide their constituents with capital, training and support - not handouts. It's the kind of organization that can help people, families and whole communities become self-sufficient."

The PLAN Fund's mission is to increase economic stability and self-sufficiency within Dallas County's low and moderate income communities by developing small business entrepreneurs, especially women, through hands-on business training, business development services and micro-credit.

"Most businesses operate as though profits and responsibility are competing interests in a zero-sum game. We



started Soap Hope to prove otherwise and to serve as a model for the Good Returns approach," says Boukadoum of the company's purpose.

With the Good Returns model, Soap Hope supports empowerment and self-sufficiency through local and global microfinance initiatives. Microlending programs that focus on women extend even further to support their children and neighbors, lifting entire communities out of poverty. Micro lenders typically focus on borrowers who don't have access to funds through traditional sources such as banks, offering individuals in poverty a chance to succeed. Through September, 2009, out of 502 business loans the average size of loans at the PLAN Fund has been \$1,475.

"Our relationship with Soap Hope brings a spectrum of new opportunities to The PLAN Fund," says Anthony Pace, executive director of The PLAN Fund. "It's not just contributing capital; it's a whole program of resources and awareness-building."

Under the arrangement, Soap Hope promotes the mission of The PLAN Fund by including educational materials in customer orders, posting information in its online store and raising awareness of the PLAN Fund through its social media campaigns on its blog, Twitter and Facebook.

The PLAN Fund goes beyond microcredit by providing education, leadership development, support and networking opportunities to ensure that investments are secure and members become self-sufficient.

"Microlending is most successful when the lender also provides education and support," says Tiritilli. "The PLAN fund excels in this area."

Members of the PLAN fund participate in hands-on training classes and peer-support programs. The classes educate members on basic skills necessary for a successful business, including cash flow analysis, sales forecasting and marketing, and pricing and cost analysis.

"With our holistic business and personal training support program, and micro-lending, it is proven we can enable people to become more successful and sustainable entrepreneurs," says Pace.

Soap Hope was created to be a [socially responsible company](#) from end to end. All products are made from 100 percent natural ingredients, packaging comes from reused materials, and all profits are deployed to support microfinance initiatives.

Purchasing all-natural body care products from Soap Hope not only benefits local business entrepreneurs through the PLAN Fund, but also supports independent soap makers and reduces consumer carbon footprints. The model of Good Returns at Soap Hope leaves the consumer with only one decision to make: which soap to buy.

About Soap Hope

Texas businessmen, Salah Boukadoum and Craig Tiritilli, founded Soap Hope in 2008 after the sale of their technology company. Located in Dallas, TX the company promotes environmentally friendly business practices and invests 100 percent of its profits into micro lending funds for women entrepreneurs. The company is best known for carrying high-quality, handcrafted products to its online customers. Soap Hope sells products from [Indigo Wild](#), [Hugo Naturals](#), [A Wild Soap Bar](#), [Pangea Organics](#) and [Fraise](#). Soap Hope's products are 100%



all-natural; free of all artificial preservatives, colors, and fragrances; [paraben-free](#); and cruelty-free.

Visit www.soaphope.com for information on the company and products or contact Salah Boukadoum at 888-893-SOAP or salah at soaphope dot com.

About The PLAN Fund

The PLAN Fund, www.planfund.org is a non-profit 501c3 whose mission is to increase economic stability and self-sufficiency within Dallas County's low- and moderate-income communities by developing small business entrepreneurs, especially women, through hands-on business training, business- development services and micro-credit.

For more information on the PLAN Fund contact Anthony Pace at 214-942-6698 or apace at planfund dot org.

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