

IDEAS Top 13 of 2013

1. IDEAS For Us awarded 501c3 nonprofit status

In January 2013, IDEAS For Us was awarded official 501(c)(3) nonprofit status by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). As a tax-exempt nonprofit, IDEAS worked with our first sponsors: **First Green Bank, Whole Foods, and the Felburn Foundation**. This milestone unlocked the potential for IDEAS to pay staff for the first time since our inception in 2008.



2. IDEAS For Africa

Following the UN Rio+20 conference, IDEAS gained widespread international exposure and interest from youth all over the World. In January 2013, IDEAS came in contact with leaders in Uganda, **Masereka Adidass, Sinamakossa Isaac, Matovu Paul and Emmanuel Marfo**, to form the first IDEAS sister NGO – IDEAS For Uganda. In one year, these leaders sprouted a network of over 50 IDEAS chapters at universities and communities throughout Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Kenya, Benin, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Zambia, Liberia, and Tunisia. IDEAS chapters participated in the International Forestry Day, International Youth Day, Earth Day, and over 20 action events while mobilizing thousands of youth across Africa engage in service projects and community organizing for environmental sustainability.



3. IDEAS speaks at 2013 United Nations Global Youth Assembly -- January 2013, August 2013

In January 2013, Executive Director, **Chris Castro** was invited to speak at the United Nations headquarters in New York for the 2013 UN Global Youth Assembly. The conference, held bi-annually in partnership with UNEP and the Friendship Ambassadors Foundation (FAF), brought together over 800 youth leaders and heads of state from around the World to discuss youth involvement in global issues. Chris had the honor of speaking to the assembly about IDEAS, and hosting a 'Hive Think Tank' workshop to engage youth participants in developing green business ideas. Later in August 2013, IDEAS International director, **Christopher Stampar**, was given the same opportunity to attend the UN Global Youth Assembly for Fall 2013, and was accompanied by **Jacob Robison**, IDEAS Northern Regional Director, to host another Hive Think Tank workshop.



4. President Bill Clinton recognizes IDEAS at 2013 UCF Graduation Commencement speech

On May 2nd, former **President Bill Clinton** gave an inspiring speech as the keynote speaker for the 2013 University of Central Florida graduation ceremony; and by complete surprise, ended by **recognizing IDEAS** and our collective impacts in engaging youth in environmental issues since our inception in 2008 and engagement with the Clinton Global Initiative University (CGIU) in 2010. President Clinton spoke about DJ Chill Will in the 2013 CGIU



and his innovative approach to educating people about renewable energy, and went on to use IDEAS as an example to inspire the graduating class that anyone can make a difference if they work together. Check out the speech at 22:00 minutes. [LINK TO BILL CLINTON ARTICLE.](#)

5. IDEAS speaks at the 2013 International Economics Congress in Berlin, Germany

In early March 2013, the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) hosted the 2013 Berlin International Economics Congress, one of the world's leading global conferences combining the fields of International Relations, International Economics, Globalization and Nation Branding with an interdisciplinary and multinational program. **Julian M. Belilty, Christopher Stampar and Chris Castro** were invited to Berlin to give a Panel lecture, ICD Interview, and a Keynote presentation called "New Hope For A New Generation," showcasing the inter-connectivity of grassroots movements as a framework for cultural diplomacy; while sharing our effective organizing models to engage youth in taking action to address climate change and sustainability issues across the U.S. and around the World.



6. Best New Solution: Hive Orlando - Think + Do Tank

In February 2013, IDEAS For Us launched our premier program, The Hive, a *Think+Do Tank* aimed at bringing local IDEAS chapters, students, professionals, community leaders and interested citizens together to develop community actions plans aimed at advancing sustainability. In 11 months, IDEAS hosted **12 Hive think tanks, and implemented over 20 community events in Central Florida**, including Canoe Clean-up expeditions in Wekiva River, movie screenings, revitalization of the Parramore Community Garden, WM Recycling and OUC Solar Farm Tours, an all-electric Eco-car show (Lead The Charge), #NoKXL Draw The Line bike rally with 300+, Aquatic ecosystem restorations and more! In 2014, we hope expand the Hive program to Miami, Tallahassee and other cities throughout our network. [LINK TO THE HIVE VIDEO](#)



7. IDEAS hosts International Green Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka

In August 2013, IDEAS For Us partnered with our affiliate, IYC-SriLanka, and the Ministry of the Environment & Renewables for Sri Lanka, to co-host the International Youth Council Green Conference 2013 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Led by IDEAS directors **Christopher Stampar and Sebastian Church**, the conference focused on environmental education, effective organizing training, action projects and our premier think-and-do tank called "The Hive!" We are excited to be helping develop 6 major International action initiatives that came out of the conference, including projects in Jordan, Nepal and throughout Sri Lanka!





8. IDEAS welcomes Stephen B. Lavalah, IREX Fellow from Liberia

In June 2013, IDEAS was selected as a U.S. host organization for the International Research & Exchange (IREX) program. From August – December 2013, **Mr. Stephen B. Lavalah** from Monrovia, Liberia -- an experienced international community leader and founder of Youth Exploring Solutions (YES), joined the IDEAS For Us team in Central Florida. Stephen contributed to the local and international IDEAS movement through a four-month fellowship funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Throughout his time, he participated in key activities including the Hive lectures, K-12 teaching, community organizing, keynote lectures, nature expeditions, and development of a comprehensive sustainability plan, *Building a Sustainable Liberia*. Read the closing blog from Clayton Ferrara.

9. Best Earth Day event: IDEAS For Mexico – American Academy

To celebrate their incorporation to IDEAS as an international chapter in Mexico, the American Academy in Guadalajara held on April 13, 2013 an *Earth Day* where grades sixth to ninth conveyed ecological awareness to their peers from lower elementary. They presented information to educate our school community on environmental issues such as water and air pollution and how we can help alleviate them. It was also a good way to find out about issues and the solutions that are being implemented in the Guadalajara area, where our school is located. In order to achieve this, we got statistics from our local government and organized field-trips to investigate more deeply about the topics that were presented and discussed. [Check out more here.](#)



10. Spotlight project: IDEAS For Uganda - Bududa District

Since 2007 to date, Bududa District and Omnigate Orphanage has been hit by sporadic landslides, mudslides and hailstorms with a memorable landslide that cleared the whole trading center, killing 362 people in Nametsi village in 2010. In August 2013, IDEAS For Uganda leaders - **Masereka Adidass, Sinamakossa Isaac and Matovu Paul** – to assess the impacts of the landslide, familiarize with the District of Bududa as a strategic way of discovering possibilities of future development projects, and assess the functionality and status of other foreign funded projects in Bududa District through the Government of Uganda and other local based organizations. Through meetings, interviews and observations, the team was able to develop an action plan to assist Bududa with reforestation, water sanitation education, ecosystem restorations and more.



11. Best USA Chapter: IDEAS For Binghamton

Since August 2011, IDEAS For Binghamton has been building an environmental movement at BU unlike never before. 2013 was a big year for Binghamton, with their membership growing and their action resonating on campus. In 1 year, IDEAS For Binghamton implemented 9 IDEAS, including a campus-wide Bike-share program; Meatless Monday's, Take Back the Tap, and Divestment campaigns; established the BU Farm initiative; and over 5 'Hit-the-Road' clean-ups in the local community. Without a doubt, the IDEAS team at Binghamton -- **Dev Gingrich, Joe Morales, Joe Mermelstein, Jacob Robison and many others** – was stellar and deserves recognition for the Best USA Chapter of the Year. [Check out a newspaper article of their efforts here.](#)



12. IDEAS For Florida + Citizens Clean Water Summit

From October – December 2013, IDEAS launched a statewide campaign to educate Florida citizens about the need to protect our natural resources and support statewide conservation programs – programs that the FWLL Amendment will enact. IDEAS For Us utilized our statewide grassroots movement to raise awareness and take action on some of Florida's most pressing and current environmental issues with 'IDEAS For Florida'. From Central Florida to Miami, IDEAS chapters across the state hosted action events, in partnership with the Florida Wildlife Federation, organizers of the FWLL Campaign, The Sierra Club and Environment Florida, to educate local communities on the importance of the FWLL amendment and the value of the precious resources Floridians are rapidly losing. Action events included, a tree planting at the Pelican Harbor Marina in Miami; an Aquatic Planting Day in Orlando; and hosting the Citizen Clean Water Summit in partnership with The Sierra Club. [Check out more here.](#)



13. 2013 Captain Planet Foundation Gala

In December 2013, Chris Castro and Christopher Stampar were invited by **Laura Turner Seydel** to attend the 2013 Captain Planet Annual Gala in Atlanta, Georgia. Throughout the night, they networked with various environmental leaders, including David Suzuki, Erin Brockovich, Charles Ortbond and Ted Turner. This marked the beginning of an incredible relationship between IDEAS and the CPF, with hopes of partnering an attending future annual Captain Planet Foundation Gala's. In the picture, Chris Castro and Christopher Stampar pose with Captain Planet, Barbra Pyle and Mr. Ted Turner. [Check out more here.](#)



Top Milestones:

- 501c3 status
- IDEAS For Africa
- United Nations Global Youth Assembly (x2)
- The Hive: Think + Do Tank
- Bill Clinton recognition + DJ Chill Will @ CGIU
- Captain Planet Foundation Gala
- IDEAS hosts Sustainability Conference with International Youth Council Sri Lanka (IYC-SL)
- IREX Fellow: Stephen Lavalah
- Powershift 2013
- International Economics Congress Berlin
- Green School National Network & Student Summit
- NASA Innovation Expo
- IDEAS Miami clean-ups and restorations
- IDEAS For Togo 'Green Cup'
- IDEAS For Mexico – American Academy chapter
- IDEAS become executive writers for UN Voice Magazine
- IDEAS For Uganda: Bududa District
- Movement Campaign: IDEAS For Florida
- Citizens Clean Water Summit
- USA Chapter of the Year: Binghamton University
- International Chapter of the Year: Makerere University, Uganda
- 2013 Environmental Leadership award from Sierra Club CFL.