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designing a future

GRAPHIC ARTISTS AND HOMELESS TEENS COME TOGETHER

Taz Pirmohamed Tagore isn't exactly a child of privilege. When she was six years old her family fled persecution in East Africa for America—with some money stuffed in her sister's teddy bear. Still, she graduated from Harvard Business School and became a Wall Street analyst, banker, and graphic designer. Several years ago in her volunteer work with homeless teens (which she's done since she was 16), Tagore noticed that many of the kids' tattered notebooks overflowed with stunning doodles and designs. Realizing this art could guide them from poverty, she created the Reciprocity Foundation with partner Adam Bucko.

Uniting 200 designers from the American Institute of Graphic Arts with 200 homeless teens across the country, the organization now makes and sells innovative and beautiful products. The profits go to the teens, but the philosophy is not "we're helping people worse off than we are," but rather, "we all benefit from interactions that improve lives."

RF's sales site, appreciate.org, now sells a selection of socially-responsible products (including brands like Newman's Own, Green Mountain, and Teany) and a few designs from the kids that have already been produced, like a spherical nest that can be used to present a gift basket and can also be turned into a lamp.

Learn more at www.reciprocityfoundation.org