

25 VISIONARIES Who Are Changing Your World

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Dr. Tabatha Parker

The Healer

The global health care system is in crisis, says Dr. Tabatha Parker, founder of Natural Doctors International (NDI). It relies on the exportation of a Western model—one that doesn't even work in the countries it's coming from—to developing countries that can't afford it.

Parker, a naturopathic doctor, sees NDI as a bridge between exported conventional medicine and centuries-old indigenous healing techniques, such as the use of herbal medicine, which in some places in the world is the dominant type of health care. "That has to be a part of the system if you're going to actually reach people," Parker says. Naturopathic doctors "are trained in a way that no one else in the world is trained: to be [that] bridge."

NDI was set up to provide a permanent presence of naturopathic doctors in developing countries. The nonprofit has a location in Nicaragua, and it has worked with the World Health Organization's traditional medicine arm to broaden its understanding of natural medicine. That's just the beginning for Parker, though, who sees NDI becoming a sort of Doctors Without Borders for naturopaths, and she hopes to establish permanent sites worldwide, all working as a link between old and new.

Azzam Alwash

Iraq's marshlands were drained by Saddam Hussein, leaving rich wildlife decimated and the region's people cast from their homes. Hydraulic engineer Azzam Alwash is working to restore the life-giving waters through his program Nature Iraq.

Carl Safina

A marine ecologist with a deft writer's touch, Safina has plumbed the depths of the seas' ecological peril in the books *Song for the Blue Ocean* and *The View from Lazy Point*, and he works to save them through his Blue Ocean Institute.

Humira Saqeb

Despite death threats and other monumental challenges, Humira Saqeb launched the magazine *Negah-e-Zan* to offer a dose of empowerment to Afghani women. Amid war and repression, it is a brave beacon of hope.

Debbie Sease

If you care about the environment, you owe a debt to Debbie Sease. The Sierra Club's national campaign director, she navigates the unnatural environs of Washington, D.C., with a savviness that has saved vast tracts of wilderness.

Orayne Williams

Once a homeless teenager, Orayne Williams earned a college scholarship. Not content with one success story, he wants to create others through his nonprofit Progressive People Movement Inc., which offers hope and help to at-risk teens.

Faith Gemmill

Seeing her Alaskan native community threatened by climate change and oil extraction, Faith Gemmill formed REDOIL (Resisting Environmental Destruction on Indigenous Lands) to fight the fossil-fuel powers. A recent victory against Shell is a measure of the group's strength.

Paula Cannon

Working on the front lines of AIDS research, University of Southern California microbiologist Paula Cannon is pursuing a treatment that could enable a patient's own cells to beat back HIV. If it's viable, it could be a lifesaver for millions.

Tom Philpott

As a writer for *Grist* and now *Mother Jones*, Tom Philpott draws links between your kitchen, your food sources, your government, and the earth. An organic farmer, he knows how to pull weeds as well as yank the chain of Big Ag.

Monica Vela

Monica Vela, a doctor and an instructor at Pritzker School of Medicine at the University of Chicago, developed a course exploring how income, sexuality, and culture affect care—and how this could and should change.