

# The Alabaster Box Story



M. Antoinette Walker is the owner of **The Alabaster Box**, a custom jewelry design company.

**The Alabaster Box** opened its doors in 2004 with the goal to design beautiful fashion jewelry for men and women.

Although Antoinette enjoyed designing jewelry to exemplify the essence of her customers through precious stones, her business evolved to much more. Her consultation sessions and jewelry parties often turned into opportunities to listen to hurting women and pray for them. The need for external beauty often led to inner healing. The treasures of **The Alabaster Box** varied depending on the need of the client.

**The Alabaster Box** turned into a marketplace ministry. For six years, Antoinette shared her jewelry at trade shows, private boutiques, art galleries, and of course through customization. However, in winter 2010, something dramatic changed the way she would continue in business. After she returned from a mission's trip to Mae Sot Thailand in winter 2010, she knew that she needed to share her talents and gift with other women in this country. In her brief two week stay, she witnessed the impoverished state of many women, children and families. As well as, women and children who were victims of human and baby trafficking, prostitution and child abandonment. Her heart cried out to them. She needed to give back. Although she shared one jewelry class on this trip, she knew that she could offer so much more.

Antoinette prayed about it and made a decision to return to Mae Sot this summer. She will leave everything familiar and join in the effort of delivering women and children from these horrible circumstances. By partnering with Life Impact, she will return to Thailand and Myanmar to provide women an opportunity to develop skills to start micro-businesses. The target audience will be women living in the surrounding villages and those housed at Life Impact's emergency shelter, Center of Hope, <http://www.lifeimpactintl.org/#/rescue-heal/center-of-hope> . Many of the women have been rescued from human/drug trafficking on the borders of Thailand and Myanmar.

By teaching the women to create, package and display quality jewelry, **The Alabaster Box** will help them to earn income and avoid the devastating effects of poverty. Antoinette, of course, will continue her tradition of **The Alabaster Box** by offering her listening ear, words of wisdom and prayer to women who seek inner wholeness.

**The Alabaster Box** and Life Impact are developing a marketing strategy for the women to effectively promote and sell their handcrafted jewelry designs. **The Alabaster Box** will provide jewelry design kits and/or materials to each participant for business start-up. Life Impact seeks to provide a coffee house where the women can display and market their jewelry to the general public and tourists. As the businesses profit, they can re-invest in supply and continue to grow their revenue.

The ultimate plan is to teach transferable skills so that the women will in turn begin to teach others, making this a cyclical process and impact thousands of women for years to come.

M. Antoinette Walker has been selected as our **2011 Grady McKnight - Destination Purpose Recipient** because she is a woman who **DREAMS BIG and FIGHTS HARD!**