


Natalie
Portman
Ben
Affleck
Mandy
Moore
Halle
Berry
Usher
Ashley
Judd
Petra
Nemcova

Shining Stars

THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT THESE CHARITABLE celebrities are seven of life's big winners: Between them they've won Oscars, Emmys, Grammys, Golden Globes, MTV Movie Awards—even the sought-after cover of the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue. But what truly unites them is their unwavering commitment to the causes that are near and dear to their hearts. We applaud these honorees, whose philanthropic endeavors are worthy of celebration, and offer ways in which you too can get involved.

NATALIE PORTMAN Foundation for International Community Assistance

I was introduced to FINCA through Queen Rania of Jordan, who is one of the women I most admire in the world. The concept is so simple and effective. They set up village banks in developing countries and give small business loans, starting from \$50, to poor women—those living on \$3 a day or less. Many have no formal education. They're only able to sign their names with a fingerprint, yet they can run and grow successful businesses. I met a woman in Uganda whose husband was beating her because she'd had 10 girls and he wanted a boy. She was living on 80 cents a day—borrowing her neighbor's dirty laundry water because she couldn't afford soap. With her FINCA loan she started a food stand, and now, 10 years later, she's hiring other women from her village. She left her husband and sends her daughters to school; one is at university. It's amazing to see people's lives massively change. —as told to Robin Sayers



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**ASHLEY
JUDD**
Youth AIDS

A few years ago Bono and Kate Roberts, the founder of Youth AIDS, approached me about the HIV/AIDS emergency and its disproportionate effect on the poor as well as girls and women. As a global ambassador for Youth AIDS I divide my time between working in the field—like distributing lifesaving information in brothels and slums—and working in Washington, D.C. I have to immerse myself in our world's grimmest realities so I can tell stories to those who can make a difference. When I spoke to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in June I focused on girls and women, and preventing the spread of HIV and reversing gender inequalities. I have a responsibility to be a voice for hundreds of millions of women who will never have a chance to speak for themselves. —as told to Heidi Ermet