

## **Making Ripples**

### **Temporary Jobs Built Our Country: Value Creation May Save It**

by Amanda Bancroft

The oil spill in Mayflower, Arkansas has made the movement against the Keystone XL Pipeline even stronger, with photos spreading all over the internet of a thick black river engulfing a neighborhood. But there is a strong argument in favor of building this pipeline: jobs. Even temporary jobs can put food on the table. In fact, “Our country was built with temporary jobs – it’s called the construction industry,” say supporters who are eager to get back to work.

The trouble is that some temporary jobs work against permanent air, food, and water. And you can’t feed a family if you’re sick. A cultural shift is needed to alleviate the current suffering arising from unemployment, which makes people crave jobs that essentially harm their own communities and families. That shift involves thinking of a paycheck very differently.

One of the biggest lies Americans are told is that the American Dream requires receiving a paycheck from any available employer, in order to acquire substantial sums of money and purchase consumer goods. We are not encouraged to be do-it-yourselfers, entrepreneurs, or resourceful farmers. Ryan & I have both held below-minimum-wage jobs: working in a rat poison plant, stocking shelves at a store, and delivering Chinese food. At that time, we too bought into the idea that our needs were met by money which came exclusively from employment outside the home.

Nowadays, we know that unemployment brings the opportunity for a new kind of paycheck, and I don’t mean welfare. Anyone who can work, and even many of those who can’t work, can seek out their full potential and decide on the resources available to them, and create their own resources. No, I’m not talking about eliminating social services...I mean value creation.

“Value Creation” is a concept we have been using to create Ripples and gradually ease into the process of becoming social entrepreneurs. It is the anti-venom of temporary jobs building an oil pipeline. The general concept is to assess the needs of ourselves, our community, and as much as we can envision, the needs of the world. Then we decide how we can meet those needs – all of those needs, not just our own need for income – with actions we are capable of performing. It’s a similar concept as growing a community garden in a food desert. Value creation lets us see problems as solutions.

For a free PDF guide from Ripples on how you can create value for your dream, scan the QR code with your mobile device and visit our post from Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>.

If I don’t understand, I will ask questions.

If I see a need, I will seek to meet it.  
If I have an opportunity, I will follow it.  
If I have a problem, I will innovate a solution.

*Ripples* is a blog connecting people to resources on sustainable living while chronicling their off-grid journey and supporting the work of non-profit organizations. Read more on this topic and others at [www.RipplesBlog.org](http://www.RipplesBlog.org)