

***About US visas attorney Tanya M. Lee had the pleasure of meeting Dian Alyan this past June in Rome, Italy at the Procter & Gamble Alumni Network Global Reunion, where Dian was being honored with the organization's 2009 Humanitarian Award. Please read her inspiring story and check out the video below.***

Dian Alyan was born in Takengon Central Aceh, Indonesia. Always a bright student, she graduated from one of the most prestigious universities in Indonesia with an engineering degree and immediately went to work for Procter & Gamble Indonesia. In less than two years, the company recognized her talent and offered her a position in the US in brand management. Dian obtained an H-1B non-immigrant visa and was eventually sponsored for permanent residence. She retained her Indonesian citizenship, however, until after her first child was born, when she realized she had fallen “deeply in love with America and what it holds dear through its values and principles.” Encouraged that America offered her children a superior educational opportunity, and motivated to make America her permanent home, Dian decided to become a naturalized citizen.

Dian approached the naturalization interview much as she had approached her education: she studied as if her life depended upon it. When the interviewer asked her only two simple questions, she said to him, “That’s it? But I am prepared to discuss the whole history of America!” She recalls the oath ceremony as wonderful and emotional, and adds, “We all sang the anthem with reverence and I stood there feeling proud to be an American!”

Although Dian had become an American, all of her family and a part of her heart remained in Indonesia, and when the devastating tsunami struck Indonesia in December 2004, she was deeply shaken by both the personal loss of 40 family members and friends and the knowledge of the devastation and suffering of her birthplace. She had always donated to charities, but she felt the situation now called for much more. After re-examining her life’s priorities, she founded the non-profit organization GiveLight Foundation in order to provide for at least a portion of the children left orphaned by the tragedy. One year later, through Dian's tireless efforts, the Noordeen Orphanage opened its doors to 50 orphans in Indonesia. Today, GiveLight supports 300 orphans in 6 countries: Indonesia, Pakistan, Sudan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Sierra Leone.

Dian’s work is far from finished. A massive earthquake struck Indonesia on September 30 of this year. Although GiveLight will continue to focus on the needs of orphans, it is partnering with Helping Hand to funnel emergency funds to Indonesia where they are most needed. In addition, plans are currently underway to open an orphanage in India, and Attorney Tanya Lee hopes to partner with GiveLight to open an orphanage in Senegal in 2011. Donations are encouraged and may be made via the GiveLight website: [www.givelight.org](http://www.givelight.org)