



EDUCATION AND HOPE

PROVIDING HOPE THROUGH EDUCATION FOR THE CHILDREN OF GUATEMALA

Thanksgiving 2003

Quetzaltenango/Norwalk

Hello once again! I hope this letter finds you all well. It has been a tremendous year and I am excited to have the opportunity to tell you about what has been going on in Guatemala. Before anything else, I want to thank each of you once again for all your heartfelt support of our work providing for the educational needs of so many children. I know that your commitment to this cause is based on the knowledge that together we are truly making a difference, and I am so grateful to feel the energy of that support. The scope of the impact we have had on these young lives is infinitely more profound because of your continued generosity. Let me share a few highlights of all that you have helped make possible through your contributions:

- A total of 138 comprehensive scholarships were provided for children and young adults, ranging from pre-kindergarten to university. These scholarships continue to cover the majority of costs incurred by each student including: registration fees, back packs, books and materials, uniforms, shoes, sneakers, socks and underwear, and medical attention.
- TEN of our students graduated from high school this year!! This is a record number for Education and Hope – almost three times as many from previous years. Almost as exciting is the fact that we also had ten students promoted from sixth grade to their first year of middle school. Making it to middle school seems to be one of the biggest hurdles for so many students in Guatemala, and such a large group being promoted is a remarkable achievement.
- The after-school tutoring program has expanded to attend to the needs of 53 children daily. We continue to serve a hot lunch to everyone who comes for extra help. A second house was recently rented (next door to the first) to accommodate the growing number of students.
- Our teaching staff has now grown to TEN full-time teachers!
- We are very grateful to announce that a child psychologist from the University of San Carlos has joined our staff part-time, and is meeting with children two afternoons a week. We had such a great need for this service and it is a tremendous relief to know that we are finally able to provide psychological counseling to so many of our children.

These are just a few bits of news from a terrific year. Many people looking at recent photos have commented that the children look happier and healthier than ever before, and nothing could make me feel more proud! It is a true testament to the work we have been able to do together. Most of these children have been abandoned by their fathers, some live in astoundingly squalid conditions, too many live with alcoholism, and an overwhelming number have had to assume the responsibilities of adults while they were still very young children. Yet, when you look at their faces, what you see is joy. This joy is a direct result of the love and attention they have received. Each one of you has played a part in providing the care that is making a profound difference in these young lives.

While the academic success of our students is always great news, each year presents new challenges. As our children advance within the school system, tuition becomes progressively more costly. Our budget has grown considerably despite the fact that we have been careful to slow the growth of the scholarship program. We are actively pursuing several grants, but the reality is that there are very few for which we are eligible. In a way, this might be a blessing in disguise. I think that one of the most remarkable things about Education and Hope is the fact that the majority of our support comes directly from individuals. It is a tremendous example of the power of community: the ability of a small group of people to effect change in the world. The challenge that remains for us is creating a support base sufficient to provide for our budget.

This year I hope I can encourage all of you to help us extend our network of support by sharing information about Education and Hope with at least one person who might be willing to contribute to our efforts. Although our budget will reach \$200,000 this year, I am confident that this is a goal that can be achieved through individual contributions if we all work together. Please remember that in an organization of this size ALL contributions are important. I would like to say a special thank you to all those who have made collections at their schools or among community groups, and those who have continued to pursue corporate matching gifts. It is this spirit of generosity and collaboration that keeps us going.

We live in a world that has resources enough for everyone, yet millions of children all over the world are starving, lack medical attention, and are unable to attend school. Many of those children even live in our own country, yet most of us live somewhat removed from this reality. With roofs over our heads, food on our tables, shoes on our feet, and access to medical care, we enjoy a certain degree of comfort compared to most of the world, and it is often difficult to imagine life without these "luxuries". I think it has become increasingly important for those of us who recognize how fortunate we are to take time each day to remember those who struggle in devastating poverty. I believe that the more we share with those less fortunate than ourselves, the more we realize how blessed we truly are, and the more we appreciate all of the great gifts we have been given.

It is a tremendous gift of grace to be able to share with those in need. Through this work I have been given the chance to see first hand the power love has to transform lives, and I am exceedingly grateful for the blessing that this opportunity to serve has been in my own life. For this same reason I am given to encourage your continued participation in this work, and in all service to others, in the hope that you, too, will continue to experience the joy of serving those in need.

I hope news of our accomplishments continues to inspire your generous support of this work. Together we are making such a profound difference in the lives of so many children and their families. We are truly changing the world, one tiny corner at a time.

With love and gratitude,



Julie Coyne and all the kids of Education and Hope

"To love God is not only to love life, but to work so that there is life." Jon Sobrino, S.J., El Salvador

IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

Letters of thanks from some of the children of Education and Hope

From Maria Carmelina, 17 years old:

Before I knew about Education and Hope, I studied kindergarten and first grade in a public school, but I had to drop out in order to work to help my mother support the family. Now I give thanks to God for bringing this project into my life. I am very, very happy to be studying in a better school. Honestly I love going to school. I want to continue studying until I earn my degree as a nurse, and even more I want Julie to feel proud of me, and I don't ever want to disappoint her. I want to do my best in my studies, and at home with my family, and with my friends at the project. Truthfully, I give thanks to God every day and ask Him to bless all of the people that are helping us, and to shower their lives with good fortune. These are truly people with good hearts that are giving my brothers and sisters and me the opportunity to receive an education. Thank you so much. Hopefully with these words I can express my thanks.

Carmelina

From Yecenia Maribel, 12 years old:

I began to work when I was six years old. My mother is handicapped by a deformed hip and it is difficult for her to support us both. When I met Julie she gave us help so that I could study. If I hadn't met Julie I would be working still. Now I am in fourth grade. My dream is to someday be a good teacher. When I have free time I like to play with my friends and at night I study so I can do well on my tests.

To all that help us, I love you all very much and may God bless you all in great ways.

Yecenia

From Juan Carlos, 14 years old:

It all began when I was a little boy and my father abandoned us, and my mother had to take us to live in an emergency shelter. It was there that we met a wonderful woman who taught me the importance of education. She paid for our registration fees so that we could go to school and bought us everything we needed, shoes, socks, backpacks etc. This woman's name is Julie, and she has helped me since I was in first grade. I am in fifth grade now.

I had a very difficult life until I met Julie. When she came into my life everything changed, and it is as if I have two mothers now. Thank you to everyone who is helping us by supporting our education. This is my life.

Juan Carlos

GIVE AN "ALTERNATIVE" GIFT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!!

Make a donation to honor a loved one,
a gift that will be shared by a child in Guatemala !!

Return the enclosed information to us with your contribution and Education and Hope will send your friend or family member a card with a photo to let them know that you have made a donation in their honor.

Amount of Gift Enclosed: _____

Name of Gift Recipient: _____

Recipient's address: _____

Your Name: _____

Message: _____

YOUR DONATION GOES A LONG WAY IN GUATEMALA!!!!

Monthly cost to support one child in the after school tutoring program - \$50

Lunch for 60 people at the after school program - \$35

Monthly cost to sponsor one child in primary school - \$50

School shoes or sneakers - \$20 - \$25

School uniform, pants or skirt - \$18

School uniform, sweater - \$13.35

Visit to the doctor - \$14

Pair of glasses - \$40

Text book - \$16.75

School desk - \$15

25 lbs. of powdered milk - \$38.67

Large can of Ensure powder (nutritional supplement for malnourished children) - \$10.67

