

CENTRAL MEXICO YOUTH FUND NEWSLETTER

Website: centralmexicoyouthfund.org

Helping young Mexicans get a quality education and lead productive lives

Help in Times of Need

Our partners in Mexico continue supporting the kids and families in their care despite the pandemic. Niños y Niñas is usually full of children in the preschool program, getting help with their homework or having a nutritious meal. But even though temporarily closed because of the health crisis, it has found a way to help the families of these children. Niños y Niñas has opened its pantry and provides groceries and household products to the parents of the kids in the program. This will continue until the doors have reopened and the kids have returned.



Many of the usual fundraising events run by our partners have been cancelled because of the pandemic, so your support is more valuable than ever to help them continue their work. You can make a secure, on-line donation using PayPal or your credit card on the "donate" page of our website at centralmexicoyouthfund.org or you can send a check to:

Central Mexico Youth Fund
3062 Summit Sky Blvd
Eugene, OR 97405

We are recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, so your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Responding to Covid-19

The spread of Covid-19 has affected activities in Mexico much as it has in the United States. Schools are closed and large gatherings have been prohibited. Our partners in Mexico have responded with appropriate preventive measures while maintaining essential services to their communities. The efforts of Niños y Niñas are described elsewhere in this newsletter, but the groups that provide a residence face additional challenges.



At El Puente de Esperanza, home to about 20 young people attending universities or college prep courses, the doors to the house have been closed to outside visitors and the students are studying and working remotely. Special cleaning protocols have been established in the living areas and kitchen. As part of their ongoing Hope Makers program, sponsored by the United Way of Mexico, the students have made use of their 3D printer to design personal protective equipment for health care workers.

Hogares Providencia operates three houses for vulnerable children who have been removed from their families due to neglect. Caregivers provide 24/7 support for the physical and emotional needs of these kids. Their work is made even more demanding with schools closed and sporting events cancelled while maintaining hygienic conditions and keeping 40 children engaged in constructive activities.



Here Comes the Sun!



Our partner El Puente de Esperanza has installed a solar hot water heater on the roof of its house in Querétaro, a city that enjoys sunshine for many months of the year. Using a portion of the funds provided in 2018 by the Elmo Foundation, one of our generous donors, the project was completed last September. Like many construction projects, this one encountered some unexpected delays. It is a gravity-based system and the water stored in the *tinacos* (the black water tanks seen on roofs throughout Mexico and shown in the photo below) had to be placed on an elevated platform to feed the water tubes in the solar device.

In addition to the fact that their gas bills have declined by more than 20%, this project also strengthened El Puente's goal of protecting the environment and has been a valuable learning experience for the young people living there.



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In Her Own Words

Ana Isabel is 17 and a student in the college prep program at the University of Querétaro. Here is her story.

You enter El Puente de Esperanza to be able to continue your studies. All the beneficiaries come from rural areas where it would be practically impossible to continue studying after high school. I, like my two brothers before me, entered this institution to be able to attend a college prep program. What I didn't know is that life at El Puente guarantees not only an academic education, but also a social and community education and lessons on how to get along with others and personal autonomy. Living here requires that you confront experiences that help you to know yourself.

For example, the first time I attended a summer school program [*which is offered to children in a rural community and taught by El Puente students*], I was assigned to the kindergarten kids and it was a nightmare for me! One of them began screaming, another hit him and both began to cry, all of them wanted to go to the bathroom at the same time, all of them were hungry at the same time. After that experience, it was clear to me that a job in childhood education wouldn't be good for me. For the next summer school program, it was my task to give dance classes and I learned that I enjoyed it.

The first time that it was my turn to be "leader of the week", I was terrified! The leader manages the house for seven days and has a lot of responsibilities because it depends on him or her that everything goes according to the weekly schedule. I was afraid that everyone would come to me with difficult problems and I began to hide in the bathroom so my housemates couldn't find me. The task of buying the weekly groceries in the supermarket frightened me terribly because I had never planned meals for so many people for so many days. That week I had a session with El Puente's psychologist to tell her that "I can't do it, I can't do it"!

But I could, and not only could I, but today I realize that I'm good at being the leader. I like coordination and working in teams and now I enjoy my leadership week. Today I find it funny when I think about how frightened I was the first time and my tears of despair. I feel very grateful because in confronting new situations we overcome our limitations and realize that we can do much more than we think.

