



Progresas

Guatemala Friends Scholarship Program



Spring 2014 Update

www.guatemalafriends.org



Greetings from Guatemala!

Those of us here in Parramos feel privileged to work for PROGRESA and realize that it is you, our donors, who make this work possible. Thank you for your interest and generosity. Here is our bi-annual report to you.

As usual, the year began with a bang. January 4th marked the start of our largest ever Teaching English Workshop. We were excited to have 20 volunteer teachers and a matching number of students. Our anxieties about handling such a large group were balanced by the thrill of being able to offer the workshop to even more students including many beginners. As soon as we said good-bye to the ESL participants we began our initial interviews with all of the new and returning students. During the next three weeks we met with students in our office and traveled to Coban and Quetzaltenango. This year, 80 students were accepted and started classes in January. To deal with the disparity between donations and program cost, we had decided to reduce the number of students served in 2014. If you can chip in, any amount helps! Mail a check or make your donation online. Please see last page for details.

In the following months we worked hard to totally revise our website. Please take a minute to check it out at www.guatemalafriends.org. We are proud of our efforts and you will find lots of stories about students as well as the opportunity to donate directly online, learn about our tours, and find contact information for many Quaker organizations as well as our own Guatemala Friends Meeting. In planning for the annual student conference we decided to focus on enhancing the sense of community among our students and inspiring them to give back to their own home communities. Once again several North American members of our advisory board chose to join us for this special weekend. See the article written by one of them for details about the conference activities.

We also held our first ever fund raiser held here in Guatemala. Some friends of Martha held a birthday party/fund raiser in celebration of her 73rd birthday. The party/fund raiser gave us a chance to spread the word about PROGRESA and also raised money for scholarships. Meanwhile our U.S. supporters have continued with a non-stop round of presentations, sales, dinners and other events to support our program. Two donors even volunteered to underwrite a series of ads promoting PROGRESA in Western Friend. Look for these ads in upcoming issues. We are deeply grateful for the contributions that all of you who are reading this bulletin have made. Your help has made possible the dreams of many Guatemalans.

Activity for Activism

On May 3rd and 4th, 2014, 75 PROGRESA scholarship recipients gathered in Mixco, Guatemala for the annual Student Conference. Organization of the conference was in the hands of SERES (www.projectseres.org) a Guatemalan based organization that does workshops on leadership training and organizing for community action. The goals were twofold, to build the PROGRESA community and to help the students prepare their community service projects.

The day and a half was a fast paced alternation of lively outdoor group building activities, creative exercises, and time spent discerning leadership gifts and ways to go forward in community activity. All activities worked on building community. As the workshop progressed, members were brought into first general and then more specific discerning and planning stages for their community service projects, an integral part of the PROGRESA program. Students were randomly divided into working groups, which supported the building of ties among those who were formerly strangers. There was much hilarity, creativity, bonding, and a lot of good work done.

Several North American Quakers from the Advisory Board were also in attendance, following a board meeting the previous day. They were enfolded into the program, providing opportunity for two way learning and understanding about the PROGRESA program and those involved in it. A Quaker Meeting for Worship was held on the final day, with over 20 students in attendance. This was a rich time of spiritual sharing and hope for the future.

We leave the conference with a renewed sense of commitment and hope, love and admiration for the staff and students of PROGRESA, and immense gratitude for the privilege to be involved in such a positive, world changing institution.

-Joe Snyder



Meet two of our current new students



Sandra Gabriela López López (Gaby) wants to save the environment. She comes from Momostenango, a small city in the highlands which was once surrounded by beautiful pine forests. Tragically many of them have been decimated by the pine bark beetle. She is aware that the environmental issues are large, affecting her community, her country and the world. In order to have an impact on the environmental problems she sees around her she feels the need for more education and greater experience of the wider world.

Gaby has wanted to continue her studies ever since she graduated from high school three years ago but her family was unable to help because they needed to support her younger brothers in middle school. She applied for various jobs but was could not get work. When a friend told her about PROGRESA she quickly applied asking us to support her in the major of Forestry Engineering at the National University Center in Totonicapán.

Gaby very bright and was an excellent student in high school but we are a little worried about whether her degree in accounting and computers has adequately prepared her for this major. This first semester she has classes in Chemistry, Mathematics, Biology, Methods of Investigation, and Computers. Her first tests have been OK but we will have to wait for more feedback. She certainly has the drive and determination but she may need some extra money for tutoring. Since the National University does not charge tuition for now her major expense is transportation and her total costs are about \$800 per year.



Abdías Isaí Rodríguez Jocol began his fourth year of Medicine and Surgery in January of 2014. He is a student at the national university in Quezaltenango. His grades are extremely good. In a grading system in which 61 is passing, he averaged 86 in his second year and 79 in his third year. I was especially impressed with his grades of 91 in both biochemistry and physiology. I was also impressed with his extremely well organized and thorough application letter. This year he will begin his medical rotations in Internal Medicine, Surgery, and Family medicine. He is hoping he will be assigned to hospitals in Quezaltenango but it is possible he will have to travel to more distant communities.

Abdías is the youngest of four children. He lives with his parents, all of his siblings, their spouses and two nieces for a total of 10 living at home. All contribute financially to the family so they are able to live fairly well in a

cement block house with running water, electricity and even cable TV so they are better off than many of our students but they are not wealthy. Abdías' expenses for 2014 will probably reach \$1,500. Unless we can find a sponsor for him, he will be graduating with a substantial loan.

What our former students are doing

Bonifacio Xivir studied medicine with our help between 1997 and 2003. He came from a small community on the south coast and was extremely humble and timid. We sometimes doubted that he would successfully complete medical school. His grades were never outstanding and he was so withdrawn that sometimes our interview with him would end up in silence because he would answer our questions with one or two words. We haven't had contact with him since he left the program in 2003 and when we went to visit his house in 2007 we learned that his family had moved.

So, we were very surprised and happy to get a call from him earlier this month. He apologized for having lost contact with us and blamed our change of e-mail address. He found our web page and our new telephone numbers and decided to give us a call. Not only did he graduate in general medicine in 2004, after working for several years he went back and became a surgeon. He has his own clinic and is working as a surgeon in Jacaltenango, in the northwestern part of the country. He told us how happy he was with the program because without our help he could never have achieved his dream of becoming a doctor. We too were happy that this timid young man has not



only become a surgeon but has decided to work in a very rural area helping the poor.

Claudia Lorena Ical Xol comes from the aldea Santo Domingo of the town of Sayaxche in the department of el Peten. Her first language is K'iché and with our help she studied to be a primary school bilingual teacher between 2008 and 2010. The community where she lives is very remote and even though Claudia was one of the first bilingual teachers in her area there were not many job opportunities. In the next several years she had to work at a variety of jobs including working in the fields. During all of this time she kept looking for opportunities to get ahead and in 2011 she began a course in Q'eqchi' another Mayan language common in her area.

Finally in 2013 she obtained a job in a nearby community using her new language. She is now using the money she earns to begin repaying her small student debt to Progreso and to pay for university classes in higher education. We feel that Claudia is a wonderful

example of how the seeds that are sown by Progreso often need time to germinate but eventually bear precious fruit.



The graduation of one of our students

I was an honored guest at the graduation of **Maria Josefina Tubac Quill**. All of the graduates and their families gathered in a basement conference room of the hotel Camino Real, Antigua. The group was small since it included only graduating social workers who had studied at the Landivar University's Antigua branch. Two students had completed only the "Tecnico" level, much like an associate degree, and 14 were receiving the full university degree which in Guatemala comes with the right to be addressed as "licenciado". This title is so respected that even the country's presidents are often addressed as "licenciado" rather than "presidente".



Josefina found me shortly after I arrived and took me to meet her mother and several other relatives. She insisted that I sit with the family so they all moved over to give me the coveted aisle seat. In the end I was glad I was on the aisle since the competition for photos was often intense. No one seemed to hesitate to stand in the aisle as the students marched in accompanied by their academic sponsors. During the ceremony, as each student received his or her diploma, they were surrounded by friends and family members furiously taking pictures. Unfortunately my pictures of the actual graduation were not very good because the room was very dark and my flash did not allow for any movement. Still I did manage one nice picture of Josefina and her mother when we got outside. -Martha Dugan



The Next Teaching English Experience

The Teaching English Experience is a soul satisfying week of hard work which is both fun and rewarding. Our students are eager to learn English and your efforts provide them with a chance to experience the joys of one on one learning. The only requirements are an open heart, patience and a desire to help a Guatemalan student. The ability to speak Spanish and previous teaching experience are helpful but not necessary. The cost for the week is \$950 which includes room and board for you and your student.

The next Teaching English Experience will be January 5th through January 13, 2015. Reserve your space by sending a check for \$300 to the address below. **BE SURE TO WRITE "TEACHING ENGLISH" IN THE MEMO SECTION OF YOUR CHECK.** For more information e-mail progres3@gmail.com.



Making a donation to Progres3 is easy!

If you want to save time, you can make a secure online donation. To do so, please go to: www.guatemalafriends.org/donate

Donate by Check

Donations by check are always appreciated. Checks should be made out to **Redwood Forest Friends Meeting** with the word "Progres3" in the memo. Please mail checks to:

Redwood Forest Friends Meeting
Attn: Guatemala Scholarship Program
P.O. Box 1831
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Contact in the U.S.

Harriet Lewis
Email: hlewis@sonic.net
Tel. (707) 526.1066



2014 Student Roster - Progresa Scholarship Program

UNIVERSITY LEVEL

NAMES **AGE** **ETHNIC GROUP**

Secondary Teaching (4 years)

1	Domingo Ixquiactap Perechú	26	K'iche'
2	Fausto López Domingo	39	Popti'
3	Ofelia Paáu Tz'í	26	Q'eqchi'
4	Rosa Xep Coj	25	Kaqchikel
5	Roselia Sisimit López	29	Kaqchikel
6	Yesika María Tucubal	20	Kaqchikel
7	Marta Reina Sanic Botones	20	Kaqchikel
8	Juan Héctor Tum Ixmatá	32	K'iche'
9	Aurelio Rodríguez Sajché	22	Kaqchikel
10	Elsa Ofelia Yojero Estepán	26	Kaqchikel
11	Hilario Tiul Coy	28	Q'eqchi'
12	Nancy Paola Mó Cal	22	Poqomchi'
13	María Yolanda Cuy Chom	21	Kaqchikel
14	Sandra Isabel Bocel Yaxón	21	Kaqchikel

Law (5 years)

1	Deker Eleazar Quiacaín Pop	21	Tz'utujil
2	Deysi Leticia Esquit Miculax	25	Kaqchikel
3	Hermelinda De la Cruz	27	K'iche'
4	Imelda María Ixmatá Tziquín	21	K'iche'
5	Irma Rut Girón	20	Español
6	Jacinto Fernando Bernal	28	Ixil
7	Paulina Elizabeth Pop	25	Tz'utujil
8	Sacarías Silitaí Vásquez	24	Mam
9	Santos David Villatoro	25	Español
10	Ticleón Manuel Aguirre	23	Akateko

Social Work (5 years)

1	Elizabeth Eunice Xingo	20	Kaqchikel
2	Francisco Daniel Mateos	30	Jakalteko
3	Gilda Mariela Hernández	24	Kaqchikel
4	Mario Mendoza López	25	Poqomchi'

Medicine (6 years)

1	Abdias Isaí Rodríguez Jocol	21	K'iche'
2	Robson Federico López	25	K'iche'
3	Victor Manuel Yacón Pichol	22	K'iche'

Nursing Professional RN (3 years)

1	Lidia Esperanza Chutá	25	Kaqchikel
2	Ana Valeska Mateo Nicolás	28	Q'anjob'al
3	Juan Francisco Tomás	21	Q'anjob'al

Business Administration (5 years)

1	Milton Rocael Manchamé	23	Español
2	Mayra Magdalena Reanda	19	Tz'utujil

Specialization in Education

(2 extra years after secondary teaching)

1	Marcos Francisco Mendoza	27	Kaqchikel
2	María Luisa Chalí Chalí	24	Kaqchikel

Systems Engineering (5 years)

1	Elizabeth Guadalupe Ruiz	19	Español
2	Joel Abdulio Arana Martínez	37	Español

Accounting (5 years)

1	Leonardo Chub Coc	23	Q'eqchi'
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Political sciences (2 years)

1	Alejandro Ramiro Chan	29	K'iche'
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Psychology (5 years)

1	Silvia Rosana Cortéz	30	Achi
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Sociology (5 years)

1	Ana Matías Felipe	26	Popti'
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Agronomy (5 years)

1	Francisco Pellecer Aguirre	23	Español
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Civil engineering (5 years)

1	José Alejandro Pérez Tzaj	23	K'iche'
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Forestry (5 years)

1	Sandra Gabriela López	22	K'iche'
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SECONDARY LEVEL

NAMES	AGE	ETHNIC GROUP
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Primary Teaching (3 years)

1	Yoselin Cordero Quintanilla	17	Español
2	Dolores Ical Jóm	19	Poqomchi'
3	Emanuel Teletor Chén	20	Q'eqchi'
4	Rafaela Jóm Ical	21	Poqomchi'
5	Santa Cecilia Morales Tizol	21	K'iche'
6	Tomás Antonio Francisco	20	Q'anjob'al

Agriculture Technicians (3 years)

1	Genaro Lem Cac	22	Poqomchi'
2	Jesús Aniceto Velásquez	22	Español
3	Odilio Cruz Pablo	19	Mam
4	Pedro Rolando Félix	24	Akateko
5	Roberto Pacheco de la Cruz	17	K'iche'
6	Sergio Octaviano Tut Xol	19	Q'eqchi'

Pre-Primary Teaching (3 years)

1	Diego Lux Tzoy 2do.	24	K'iche'
2	Dora Elisa Sajbochol	17	Kaqchikel
3	Gladys Sajbochol	18	Kaqchikel
4	Karla Leidi Simón Mejía	18	Kaqchikel
5	Lilibeth Basilia Ajxup	16	K'iche'

Young students under special fund

1	Isabel López García	17	Kaqchikel
2	Margarita Stephanye López	15	Kaqchikel
3	Jasmin Mishel López García	12	Kaqchikel

Vocational Nursing (1 year)

1	Joel Efraín Imul Joj	23	K'iche'
2	Edwin Manuel Che Itzep	24	Q'eqchi'
3	Franklin Remigio Botzoc	22	Q'eqchi'

Bookkeeping (3 years)

1	Claudia Micaela Coj Tziquin	18	K'iche'
2	Dina Yamilet López Beletzuy	17	K'iche'
3	Marielena Gómez López	21	Español

Electricians (3 years)

1	José Humberto Ramírez	19	Mam
2	Oseas Abimael Arias Torres	17	Español

Computers (3 years)

1	José Jeremías Sanic Tzún	22	K'iche'
2	Walter Pérez de León	22	Mam

Music Teaching (2 years)

1	Sonia Isabel Morales Roquel	16	Español
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Business Administration (3 years)

1	Juan de Jesús Sohom	18	K'iche'
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Building Drawing (3 years)

1	Abner Daniel Aguilar	20	Q'eqchi'
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Physical Education (3 years)

1	Wilson Anibal Pichiyá Chutá	20	Kaqchikel
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Dental Technician (3 years)

1	Leonardo Samuel De León	20	Mam
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Students in 2014

This year our program is supporting 80 students in more than 25 different majors in university and secondary levels. Forty-five students (56%) are attending university and 35 (44%) are in secondary school.

As for their gender, we have 38 women (48%) and 42 men (52%) which shows our efforts to give the same opportunities to men and women. The average age of our students is 23, but we have seven students younger than 18 and five in their 30's.

Secondary teaching (14 students) and law (10 students) are still the most popular majors at the university level. At the secondary level, primary and pre-primary teaching (11 in both careers) have the largest number, followed by agricultural technician (six students).

The dominant ethnic groups are still K'iche', Kaqchikel, Q'eqchi' and Spanish.