



# Bienestar.

Hello everyone:

Warm January greetings to you – literally! And some news on our collective work with BIENESTAR that we think will fire up your spirits as well.

As we did earlier last year, we'd like to share with you some of the things we've been able to achieve with your donations in terms of projects and scholarships, and the effects that these are having in the lives of our friends in Guatemala.

### **Your monthly donations at work...**

For the **BIENESTAR** board – before Christmas we were extremely pleased to be able to send – on your behalf -- **\$4,370**:

- ✓ \$1,120 to support a project that will help Nuevo Horizonte establish a Spanish Language School in their community to add to their Solidarity Tourism Program.
- ✓ \$3,250 to be dispersed in student scholarships.

Below is further information about these initiatives. First, though, some updates on our previously-funded work.

**Proyecto Azucar** (Project Sugar) ... to help a group with Diabetes with their insulin costs while they established other self-sustaining supports. The good news is that the group has been so successful that they have moved from insulin to oral medication at present and our funds have been used to cover ongoing blood work monitoring. An exciting aside to this is that Mary Ann will soon be arriving in the community for 5 months to do further work toward the dream of developing a regional center for Diabetes in the Peten, and will be able to monitor all of this more closely.

**Scholarships** ... This past year we were able to support four students with their studies -- all of them were very successful. And given that there is an expectation that these students volunteer in a range of community activities, the whole community – not just the 4 of them – benefitted from our support.

A highlight for us in the spring when we were in the community was an evening spent with them and the Nursing students, where they each spoke openly of their lives, goals and dreams. We were all affected by their hope and their determination. We also recently received heart-felt notes of thanks from each of them, expressing what Bienestar's participation has meant to both them and their families. Here is a translated sample of two of those letters.

**Paola** (3<sup>rd</sup> year High School)

*Hello Bienestar Foundation*

*Let me wish you the best in your days and that you are doing well.*

*I am writing to express my deep appreciation for the help you have provided me over this year. It has helped so much, and I have now successfully completed my last year of high school.*

*I send thanks and blessings to all of you.*

**Jaqueline** (College level in Business Administration)

*I want to thank you for the financial support you have given me this year. My family is very grateful as well.*

*The truth is that my goal has always been to study and strive to get good grades to excel among my colleagues. This year has brought both good and difficult experiences, but I have always felt a determination that pushes me to keep going. It is an honor to say that, thanks to you, I have overcome these challenges.*

*I hope you always feel satisfied and proud that your great effort is helping young people who really want to overcome difficulties and to be someone in life, and who knows – finally to be able to help other young people in the same way that you have supported us. Thank you.*

And now for the year to come...

## **Language School Project**

Nuevo Horizonte has been working hard to create a **Spanish Language School** for visitors, to help them take their Community Tourism Program to another level. Bienestar has contributed **\$1,120** toward bringing a senior teacher from a successful Spanish school in Xela to the community for a month-long intensive training session for the prospective teachers.



The group has been extremely thorough in their planning, focussing on teaching frameworks, community home-stays, and a range of cultural activities that will enrich a student's experience. Randy, Mary Ann's husband, has been working with them from a distance, and will be there first-hand to help during their initial months of operation.

## **Scholarships**

One of the highest reported priorities for all our partners is still education -- vital for the future of their young people and their communities, but inaccessible to many due to the costs involved. As a result, the biggest portion of your donations this time -- **\$3,250** -- will go to help six young students pursue their education, two more than last year!

In Nuevo Horizonte, BIENESTAR continues to partner with a Community Women's Organization which oversees these funds -- selecting recipients from the many applicants, and then regularly meeting with them and their families to monitor their progress, ensure they are in good standing, and involve them in active leadership in the community itself.

### **Scholarship Recipients for the coming year**

Marina de Jesus Garcia  
*3<sup>rd</sup> Year High School*



Jaquelin Castañeda  
*Final College Level in Business Administration*



Paola Martinez  
*1<sup>st</sup> Year College Level*



Evelin Vasquez  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Year College Level in Arts & Sciences*



Bernabe Alexander Ramirez  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Year College Level in Arts & Sciences*



Beberlin Jimenez  
*1<sup>st</sup> Year in Business Administration*



On behalf of the Bienestar board and our project partners, **we thank you for your solidarity and ongoing support of this community-based social change,** and always welcome any questions you may have.

Too, we invite you to consider joining us in this worthy endeavor if you have not already done so. Attached are instructions on how to do so.

**Remember, for the price of even two coffees a month -- \$10 – with a tax receipt, this amounts to only \$7 a month.**

**Tax Receipts:**

For the tax season you will receive an email from CanadaHelps with your 2016 charitable tax receipts attached for printing. If you have any problems with this, please contact me.

Warmly,

Michael  
For the Board (see below)

Board members:

Roy Nelson  
Liz Knox  
Teeka Ferguson  
Cheralynne Kennedy  
Monika Nowatschin  
Mary Ann Morris  
Michael Chapman

