

VAMOS ADELANTE FOUNDATION



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Dear Elene, Lars-Erik and other Le-darhogsksolan Friends,
Some months have passed since the last report and I would like to give you a general update of our program. The school term started in the beginning of the year but it was not without a couple of obstacles. The government couldn't decide which date the school would start. First it was the 2 of January, then the 26th; finally it was postponed until the 2nd of February. The good news though are that, according to the Ministry of Education, that the students do not have to pay any



school fees any longer and will receive school material. Of the latter we have not seen a glimpse yet and we bought books .



Susann Kopelke (26) and Tomas Callesen (23) arrived in March and are volunteering for Vamos Adelante for 6 months. Susann is from Rostock, Germany and is doing her practical time needed to complete her social-work studies. Tomas is her partner from Gothenburg, Sweden and will his best to protect her from whatever dangers showing up on the way. He previously worked with disabled students and specialized on autistic children.

As you can see in the picture they don't have time to be lazy and from the first day they worked side by side with the other Vamos Adelante co-workers. Presently both concentrate heavily on helping V.A children with learning disabilities.



In January more children than anticipated wanted to start in our private V.A. school and we urgently needed a additional classroom. Thanks "Miracles in Action" we were able to solve this problem. The classroom was built within ten days and was finished in March. Everybody gave a helping hand and worked hard. Vamos Adelante also hired 4 more teachers, a total of 6 for 1-6th grade.





We are happy to show you several students who have made it to college level „carrera“ all the way from Primary school. Unfortunately many girls still drop out early in spite of our consistent motivation training. Early pregnancy, lack of help from parents, bad advise from friends, the need to help their families financially, are just a few reasons why they do not continue.

The rate of girls attending Basico (7-9th grade) with a Vamos Adelante scholarship has increased though and hopefully we can convince the students at the end of the school year to continue in college.

Vamos Adelante presently sends 1132 children and young adults to school with a scholarship!!



Fidelina, who has been with Vamos Adelante for eight years, is at this point responsible for the education department. She supports both teachers and students in many ways. It can be problems with student’s learning habits, lack of concentration in school, problems at home, financial trouble, etc. Some are even afraid to attend classes for different reasons, often gang related issues. In special cases Fidelina visits the students at home to talk to the parents and kids, and to find answers and solutions.

Students who have difficulties in school we send to our afternoon program five times a week for 3 hours in 4 villages. Here the children who need more attention receive help to improve their skills. We try to bring in some joy trough games and activities and help out with their homework.



Glenda, who started in the middle of January, is our new education supervisor and is assisting Fidelina. She comes from a village called San Felipe and knows the area and people well. Glenda is a young bright woman who worked as a teacher before and we are delighted to have her on our team.

In our opinion it is important to avoid problems with inequalities in school and therefore we gave our children, although not mandatory, a uniform. It consists of simple, navy blue pants or skirt, a white top, and the kids wear it very proudly. Most students do not own more than one outfit and therefore they welcomed the clothes very much. Later on they also received a backpack.





The worldwide economic crisis of course also affected Guatemala and as a result many workers have been fired from the farms and factories. Hunger and poverty in the villages is growing rapidly. Many children we manage to find in time and can help them through generous long-term godparents or through milk & food donations from friends.



Dr. Renee has been volunteering with us for many years and is a wonderful doctor who has endless patience. She knows that many patients leave home at 2 am to come and see her and she takes her time explaining their problems. Dr. Renee enjoys working with us as she knows that we comply with follow-up services in case a patient needs guidance and financial aid for different types of tests, , cancer screening, operations, dental care, etc.

In some cases our help came too late –Pedro lost his eye as his mother refused to take him to the hospital-we insisted but the infection had spread too far.

Fide saw Isaias, here to the left, during a routine visit in the villages and basically dragged him and his mother to our clinic and from there to a specialist. The mother did not want to come but Fide finally convinced her of the importance to see a doctor. The boy had been kicked by a horse and luckily help came in time!

Accompanying elderly people to hospitals for different exams such as tuberculosis, operations etc. needed, is an important part of our program.

Many of them do not have family or are simply too poor and too afraid to leave their village. Vamos Adelante pays for their passage and their exams and stays with them from the time they leave until they return.





In our little private school several children suffer of different types of abuse, etc. but thanks to good attention and the afternoon program most have been able to integrate well in their class such as Jose Catalino whom you have been sponsoring for many years. Not once has this boy missed a grade but he also receives much positive attention at home . Sometimes other children pick on him when he can not coordinate his movements well, then Catalino gets aggressive but only for a short time. Norma Candelaria we do not have a picture of this time as she lives so remote and due to the frequent assaults we have not visited her with a camera but she is doing well. Together with her mother she goes to speech therapy once a week which means traveling almost for a day back and forth. Norma speaks better and understands more at this point.



In our school the students receive vitamins once a day which really helps. We are considering giving them a hot meal as well.

Let me tell you about a few more tough cases we have, but these children are much better nowadays thank to our good attention :

Joel, barely said a word , did not want to be part of anything for almost a year. His mother died. to sur-



with together. Joel today has increased in child. Blanca is being beaten by her does not like her, therefore he does his alcoholic father until the mother

was hacked to death and 3 months later his father The 4 brothers did not want to separate and decided vive on their own! Vamos Adelante is helping them food and their education and they managed to stay weight and participates in class almost like any other stepfather almost daily. She is not his child and he not pay for her education. Willy was terribly hit by finally threw him out as things became too violent.

Nature is showing a lot of aggression lately. Strong storms have turned big trees into chop sticks. Almost daily our neighbouring volcano Fuego is throwing big rocks and ashes high into the air and shakes the area heavily. The situation was so critical last week that nearby villages almost had to



be evacuated. Ashes filled the air up in Ceylan that one hardly could see anything at all and the lava threatened to come down from all sides of the crater.

Many warm regards and a huge thank you for the help from the two children, mothers, our doctor and Nina with the rest of The Vamos Adelante Team.

