

VAMOS ADELANTE FOUNDATION



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Dear Ledarhogskolan Friends ,
It has been a while since I wrote to you but believe me – we have been busy as always and Amarilis never ceases to surprise us with her activities in Informatica Amigos: the computer school& scholarships for disabled, which you now fully support. 31 students participated in the first trimester, 35 started in May and we expect that at least a total of 90 disabled students will graduate at the end of the year. The groups are small and receive plenty of attention. The school has received recognition from the government even through National television several times, nevertheless no financial funds have been sent and the school is still fully supported by Vamos Adelante donor's.

The goal is of course that the students become as independent as possible and to find work for them. Each year at least 5-6 students found a job, others have decided to continue their academic schooling such as going to Junior High School and University, which is also funded through Vamos Adelante. Considering the opportunities for disabled in Guatemala these are great results. It has become one of the most successful projects for disabled here in the country.

Picture:

Eddy Donaldto Garcia is 20 years old and mentally retarded. Amarilis has with much patience helped him to get through computer class and he is now even going to Junior High School.



Oscar Gregorio, 22 years old received a prosthetic leg from you, as you might remember. He has eight siblings and his father works on the fields. Oscar decided to move to the capital several years ago, where he hoped to find work but soon discovered that his education level was much too low. He started to study with Amarilis and completed the course with much success and is now in Junior High School with the help of our scholarship. In January classes started again and besides regular classes Amarilis made the school participate in art classes as well as in a big public sports/dance event for disabled. In February several deaf/mute students and a blind young man started in a special course.

In February Conalfa classes began-these are literacy classes, 1-6 grade Primary school-which a disabled Informatica student gives to illiterate adults from the neighborhood.

Valentine's day was celebrated among the group and at the same time subjects such as: self-esteem, values within society and themselves and friendship were discussed.

On the picture to the right: Norma sitting in the very back is Amarilis' sister- and always helping wherever she can. Presently she is giving students an extra hand but also teaches arts and crafts. Here she is reinforcing math to two deaf students and to Jose, suffering of cerebral palsy.



Mario Enrique Juarez, 22 years did not even own a wheelchair 4 years ago until we gave him one. He suffers of cerebral palsy and is one of our most amazing students. When he started he could barely control his hands-he now studies Junior High school on Saturdays, started his own activity group for students with cerebral palsy, which is the only one in Guatemala. Mario in the future wants to become more independent so that his mother can take a day job-presently she is working at night and is taking care of Mario in the day-time. Mario has suffered much of discrimination during his life but through Informatica Amigos has learned what self-esteem means and that there is indeed a future for students like him.

Henry Fransisco Villatoro Pix is 25 years old and studies computer technology at the university Galileo. He was very good in the computer classes and Amarilis convinced Henry to enrol in university. Henry loves to study and hopes one day to graduate with good grades so that he can find a decent job. His mother Julia sells lottery tickets and said that without the scholarship her son would not be able to study. Henry barely receives any help from home nor much moral support.



Mauricio Ramirez is 25 years old and is another scholarship student in Junior High School. He loves math and accounting and is thinking of becoming an accountant in the future.

Junior High School Scholarships: 10
University Scholarships: 4
Cerebral palsy students: 7

The highest cost of the school consists in transport of the students. The government donated a bus for disabled but as it turned out the bus was 16 years old and had the steering wheel on the right side-like in England. Changing that would have meant enormous costs and it was decided not to accept the bus. Several other organizations followed our example !!



At the end of February two Informatica Amigo's members learned about a long distance course for accountants but later expressed their doubts whether this system is useful here. It was poorly taught. 14 very expensive special wheelchairs for children who can not sustain their head and back were donated by inmates from the Colorado prison. They were brought to Guatemala through the Airline Ambassadors=AA airline staff and distributed through Informatica Amigos. In March Amarilis and Silvia participated in a sign language course, as we are receiving more deaf/mute students.

Juan Jose is 39 years old and is paralyzed from the waist down since a bad truck accident, which happened when he was 17 years old. He now lives with his 5 brothers and mother. Until he heard of Informatica Amigos he barely left the house. He is now a very active student who truly enjoys learning and his dream is to go on to university. As he kept much to himself for many years it took him some time to get used be with the other students in a group but he is doing well.

Maira Lopez Garcia, 48 years old suffered of poliomiectilis and has to use a wheelchair. Her father who is 85 years old, brought her to computer class and to our workshops during the last two years, and Maria even accepted a scholarship for Junior High School from us last year. She was a bit reluctant at first due to her age but we encouraged her to pursue her academic career, and she did! Maria is supporting her father and her 14 year old son by sewing or fixing clothes. She dreams of being able to have a permanent and secure job without discrimination.



Wendy, 22 years suffers of mielomlingocele and hidrocefalia but nevertheless found Amarilis two years ago and has been studying hard ever since. She had trouble adapting to the other students but after a year Wendy finally realized that there were other participants much worse off than herself.

Wendy is now in Junior High School (with some difficulties)nevertheless is thinking of going to university as she would like to to study psychology.

The school has given this young woman self-confidence, which was basically unknown to her and she has become a fun and friendly student with many hopes for the future.



Edgar is 32 years old, married and worked as a driver until two months ago when the company had to cut down heavily on personal . Edgar can hardly bend his knee of his left leg, which is also 10cm shorter than the other one after a car accident six years ago. He is now studying to become a computer technician at the university- Amarilis directed him towards this career, which he truly enjoys.

The Galileo Univerity has very good programs for disabled students; the building as well as pathways are adapted to the needs of wheelchairs and the costs are low compared to the other universities.

Two young Mayan nuns who are running a home for abandoned elderly also participate in our program. We try to multiply our efforts as much as possible.

The project Vamos Adelante and Informatica Amigos would like to express our sincere gratefulness for your on-going support of this positive and successful project. Self-esteem, good education and leadership are most certainly some of the main headlines of this school.

We hope to carry on and to spread the same spirit you teach in Sweden and in other countries.

Thank you for helping making many dreams come true.

Amarilis & Nina

