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Honduras Hope Transforms Lives!

As spring 2017 turns to summer, Honduras Hope continues to transform lives, reaffirming our commitment and dedication to our collaborative work with the people in Yoro, Plan Grande & San José. On our spring trip we saw many signs that programs sponsored by Honduras Hope are making significant, sustainable improvements in health, education, economic stability, and empowerment.

Meetings with families, *Patronatos* (Community Boards), in-country partners and program coordinators continue to guide programmatic decisions and build relationships. We invite you to read the articles that follow to learn more about our exciting work which is made possible only with your generous support. Thank you!



Spring 2017 Highlights

~ We celebrated the successful opening in February of the Beauty School at CEVER. What an achievement! Thank you to Marianne Vaughn for her work to bring this dream to fruition.

~ Board member Peter Swanson continues to work to make water filters available to all families so they can purify their water and reduce the incidence of parasite born illnesses. Over 40 families now have access to clean drinking water!

~ The nutrition program in San José & Plan Grande continues to have great success in preventing childhood malnutrition. More than 50 children in each community receive a hot, nutritious meal 3 times a week. HH provided funds for a new cooking shed in San José, which has greatly simplified the preparation of meals.

~ Board member Kathy Swanson works closely with the Girls Empowerment program, bringing them new experiences and a brighter future.

~ Our mentoring and support of student's access to education over many years has led to a significant increase in students attending college. HH supports 16 college students, including 2 in Medical School! What once was only a dream is now becoming a reality for so many!

~ Bill Briggs, whose vision became Honduras Hope, continues to guide and inspire us all!

Overall, our collaborative work in Honduras reaffirms our vision that
TOGETHER EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE!

Clean Drinking Water ~ EcoFiltros & Rain Barrels

In April, Board member Peter Swanson gave a presentation about water filters (*EcoFiltros*) to families in Plan Grande. An instructional video was shown, and Cristian Ortega, one of our students, served as translator. HH subsidizes the cost of the filters to make them more affordable for families. They are beginning to see the benefits of using the *EcoFiltros*. 19 were purchased during this trip, bringing the total number distributed to 40. The goal is for every family to have access to clean drinking water.

Peter, along with other students from the Boarding House and their families, worked to build a rain barrel and gutter system for the Nutrition Center in San José. San José has had contaminated water and a failing community water system for several years and is working on securing government support to build a piping system from a new spring. The rain barrels will help offset demand on this system. Rain barrels are also being used at the Boarding House and in Plan Grande. When used in conjunction with the *EcoFiltros*, they provide a source of affordable, clean drinking water.



Girls Empowerment ~ Plan Grande



Girls' Empowerment Soccer Team

HH hosted guest Stacey Pilotte, a member of the US Air Force, who challenged the members of the Girls Empowerment program to a boot camp experience, leading them in squats and push-ups. At the end Stacey discussed the benefits of daily physical activity and healthy diets. During this visit, we also treated the girls to a day trip to the ocean. Most of the girls had never seen the ocean, since it is a costly three-hour bus ride one way. They were hesitant in the water at first but ended up jumping in the waves and playing tag on the beach. The girls also challenged kids from San José to a *fútbol* (soccer) match. San José won by a goal after a penalty kick shoot-out. The Girls Empowerment program has the support of local agencies, including the *Oficina de Derechos Humanos* (Human Rights Office). Through the efforts of our dedicated mentors, we are united in creating an environment where young girls can realize their potential and exercise their rights for self-awareness and fulfillment.

The Vocational School ~ CEVER

HH was instrumental in the creation of two new courses of study at CEVER, the vocational school in Yoro. HH board member Alex Ray contributed funds, skill, mentorship, equipment and much more to build the facility and start a Culinary and Hospitality program, which after only 3 years is self-sustaining! The students host low-cost events which provide much-needed revenue for CEVER.

New this school year is the Beauty School. Suyapa Banegas, a former student supported by HH, is the program's first instructor. Due to her diligent marketing of the new program, two semesters are fully enrolled! Board member Marianne Vaughn, herself a beautician, raised funds and collected supplies for the program, and is pursuing a partnership with a beauty supply company to support the program long term. Students who complete the program receive certification for employment or for opening their own businesses. Congratulations to Suyapa and the first year class!



Practice makes perfect!



New textbooks donated by HH!



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We travel to Honduras
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Health & Medical

The Health Clinic in San José is an important program supported by HH. Vilma, the nurse, staffs the clinic five days a week, seeing to 25-30 patients a day from San José and the surrounding communities. She also does community outreach on



Nurse Vilma helps a mom and her baby

topics such as nutrition, sanitation, and health education. Free vitamins are given to all children under age 12 throughout the year. Free pre-natal vitamins are given to expectant mothers. She also provides support to the people of Plan Grande. In April, she visited every house in Plan Grande to weigh all the children ages 5 and younger. This was her way of reaching out to the more isolated families. We joined her for a full day of visits. Six children were identified as malnourished. Vilma gave them high potency infant supplements provided by HH. She is invaluable to HH, serving as an in-country liaison, helping oversee the early childhood nutrition programs in San José and Plan Grande, and coordinating care and support for those who need to travel to San Pedro Sula for additional medical attention. The San José Patronato (Community Board) used funds generated by the clinic for a new roof on the Nutrition Center; an excellent sign that the community



leaders are working toward self-sustainability. We were also excited to learn that Vilma's daughter Meisey will be attending nursing school!

Education

The largest portion of the HH annual budget goes toward supporting educational programs. In Plan Grande, HH pays for a kindergarten teacher, and provides full financial assistance for 53 students to attend secondary school in Yoro (fees, uniforms, shoes, books & supplies). For students from San José, a six-hour round-trip hike from the nearest secondary school, HH maintains and staffs a Boarding House (BH) in Yoro so they can attend school. They live at the BH during the week and can go home for weekends to help their families. This year there are 23 boys and girls living at the BH in separate buildings. They are supervised by Tonita, our housemother. They have regular chores, computer access and homework support. We develop lasting connections with the students (many are on Facebook!) and look forward to each visit when we talk with them about their grades, their plans for the future, and other topics that may come up. HH also provides financial assistance for students from both communities to attend classes at CEVER, or pursue a college degree. We are very proud of all our students!



BH student meeting

Board member Peter Swanson taught the BH students about square-foot-gardening, composting, and environmental awareness.

They have become excellent gardeners! He is a champion of these students and donated several computers in recognition of their efforts.



Plymouth State University's Got Talent!



Marketing students at Plymouth State University in Plymouth, NH, held a student talent show May 4 to benefit Honduras Hope. The event was held at the Flying Monkey Performance Center in Plymouth. Marketing students raised awareness on campus about conditions in rural Honduras and HH's programming to support families and communities. They also learned the ins and outs of marketing a live event. All the proceeds from the event, totaling over \$1,700, were donated to Honduras Hope. MANY thanks to PSU students and Professor Terri Dautcher!

Women's Cooperative



Pine needle baskets

The Women's Cooperative in Plan Grande has been engaged in several micro-businesses over the last few years with support from HH. These have included running a thrift store selling clothing donated by HH, a sewing cooperative and jewelry-making. The latest entrepreneurial venture is making pine needle baskets for sale in U.S. stores. On a previous trip, Board member Kathy Swanson and Women's Co-op members met with Tolupani women from Luqigue, a nearby village, to learn the art of pine needle basket weaving. On this trip, the women of Plan Grande proudly presented their handiwork. HH buys the baskets from the women at a fair trade value and sells them in the US. These micro-businesses teach business skills, bring lasting economic change to the community of Plan Grande and empower the women who participate.

To buy a basket and support the women of Plan Grande, visit the Gift Garden in Milton, MA, the Country Carriage in Meredith, NH, or Salon Del Rio in Littleton, NH. Many thanks to our business partners for their support!

YOU CAN HELP!

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