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If you want to help for a day, give them rice;
If you want to help for a while give them a tree;
If you want to help for an eternity, give them an education.

YEAR 2008 IN REVIEW

Project Christine Marselli La Rosa



Cristina Marselli La Rosa, our summer co-worker and dear friend of twenty-four years, quietly passed away in her sleep on June 15, 2007. In her memory, we have started a new project working with the scavengers of the garbage dump in Matagalpa, Nicaragua. There, families work together to sift through the city's trash, earning just one to two dollars a day. Presently, all the families drink from a chemically contaminated river that runs through the garbage dump and Leonardo holds makeshift classes



for five-year-olds in his school's hallway with a dirt floor. Our plan is to first provide the community with drinking water and then to build and fund a school for the preschoolers and kindergartners.



School plans are progressing. To date, we have set up a nonprofit organization in Matagalpa and gained the support of the city government, the Catholic Diocese of Matagalpa, and The Oasis Elementary School. Leonardo Lux, a twenty-five-year-old Christian Minister, founded The Oasis School where he reaches 400 children. He started teaching the children of the Matagalpa dump on a blue tarp four years ago. (Just like my first school!) The Christine Marselli Kindergarten will have three classrooms for four- and five-year-old children. Three teachers are already in place, with Leonardo as the

director. We'll keep you posted.

OUR SCHOOL: LA ESCUELA DAVID LYNCH



Our main emphasis at Responsibility is education for the children living in the dirt-floored shacks around the Tijuana municipal dump. That is where we operate a preschool/kindergarten, a computer lab for children and adults, art classes for aspiring artists, and a place for tutoring.

Profe Felipe continues to be our assistant director of the organization. Profe Lili, left, is the principal, and

Profe Jaime is in charge of the computer/art/tutoring school. This year, with all our combined schools and classes, we have close to 200 students. (Look at how the students are learning the alphabet. He is a walking Letter A. What a creative learning experience!)



SHARING A SUCCESS STORY

I met Dionisio, a former student whom I hadn't seen in twenty years, at Felipe's daughter's birthday fiesta. Since he has a passport, I asked him to be the guest speaker at our annual fund raiser. He answered, "Yes, and I will do it in English."



Dionisio's entire family scavenged the city garbage dump to survive. In this 1985 picture on the left that is Dionisio with his brothers and sisters working in the dump.

(Dionisio is the boy at the left, standing lower than the others.)



Today, Dionisio is a car mechanic. At our fundraiser, his emotions overwhelmed him (picture on right). Through tears, he spoke fondly of the opportunities Responsibility gave not only him but the entire community. His speech ended with "I would not have the job I have today if it weren't for the

opportunities David Lynch gave me growing up. I love you, David."

We're so proud of Dionisio. He proves our motto of 28 years, "If you want to help for an eternity, give them an education."

UNITED STATES OUTREACH PROGRAM

Along with our teaching the children living in the dump, we have been providing educational and outreach programs for American students. High school and college students from all over the U.S. do their social service work or student teaching at our school in Tijuana. This hands-on experience proves unforgettable for these students. Roughly 2500 U.S. students a year participate in some way, whether it is playing Santa, doing a fund raiser, or teaching at our school.

Unfortunately, due to the violence this year in Tijuana, our program inviting students to do their social service work or student teaching at our school has been temporarily suspended.

SUMMER SCHOOL/CAMP

This summer you sent 78 children to camp. Through the generosity of Responsibility donors, our kids experienced classes in art, computers, English, sports, and dance each morning. In the afternoon, we took the students on trips to museums, the park, and the beach. As with the past twenty-eight summers, the beach was their favorite field trip. Just look at the excitement on the students' faces at this new experience.



CHRISTMAS



This past Christmas, we played Santa Claus to 600 children in Tijuana. (We include surrounding neighborhood kids along with the students from the special education school, which the daughter of Jorge, our co-worker for the past 22 years, attended school.) Each child wrote a letter to Santa and attached his/her photo. The popular requests were for bikes, iPods, and DVD players. We distributed the letters to churches, businesses, schools, Rotary Clubs, and readers like you.

In mid-December, with \$30,000 worth of presents, Santa and his helpers from Southwestern College, both staff and students, crossed the border into Mexico.

OUR NEW SCHOOLS/Medical Clinic



NRG, a U.S. power plant company, funded our two new school buildings. We now have more than three times the space we had before. Our school has a computer lab, an auditorium, and a kindergarten. We are also housing a free community medical center, left, funded by the Mexican Department of Health. Pictured at right is a student receiving medical attention from the doctor.



GREAT NEWS ABOUT OUR SCHOOL'S BOOK



Armando and the Blue Tarp School

Many of you are familiar with this picture book from Lee & Low Books, based on my work helping children of the Tijuana dump learn. Authors Edith Hope Fine and Judith Pinkerton Josephson have had exciting news. *Armando and the Blue Tarp School* has been named a nominee for the 2009–2010 California Young Reader Medal. Schools statewide that participate in this program order copies of all the

nominated books and students vote next spring on their favorites in five categories. Part of the proceeds from the sales will be donated to Responsibility, so please help us spread that word to schools and teachers that *Armando* is on next school year's Young Reader Medal list.

You can order copies from your local bookstore or online at Amazon.com. Visit www.bluetarpschool.com and www.californiayoungreadermedal.org to learn more.

SPECIAL THANKS

As always, friends, we thank every single one of you for your support in 2008. If you didn't receive a thank you card for your gift, please accept my apology. I do all the administrative office work alone, so sometimes I make mistakes. But, that doesn't mean your gift is less appreciated. It means I should hire an assistant! ☺

Your continued support is both needed and appreciated.

Gratefully,

David Lynch, Teachers, and Kids

