

# Responsibility

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January/February 2001

## Special Thanks

### Sharing My Year 2000 Letters with You

**"This is the best organization you can support."** (Stated in a video to welcome the guests at our annual fund-raiser.)

Bill O'Reilly, Fox Cable News Channel

**"I love this organization."** (Stated in a video to welcome the guests at our annual fund-raiser.)

Actress Susan Sarandon

**"We were extremely impressed, actually amazed, at what you have accomplished with your school."** (They visited the dump and then sent a letter with a check for \$2000)

La Jolla, California

**"You and your staff are Heroes."**

Brighton, Michigan

**"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to help even if in a small way. The newsletters are great but heartbreaking."**

Sister Marie

**"Your devotion is a miracle to the Tijuana dump children."**

Boulder, Colorado

**"I read your newsletter as soon as I receive them. They are always very interesting."**

Syracuse, New York

**"Please continue to send the newsletters. They always touch my heart."**

Rancho Cucamonga, California

## Year 2000 in Review

### Our School: La Escuela David Lynch

Our main emphasis is education for the children living in the dirt-floor shacks in the Tijuana municipal dump. It is there where we operate a preschool/kindergarten.

Like all teachers, our instructors spend their time planning creative lessons for very active children with a lot of sugar in their blood. I spend my time giving the teacher helpful hints, organizing field trips—we do as many hands-on learning experiences as we can—planning for special celebrations, searching for educational materials in Spanish, and requesting funds.

Our efforts are paying off. Defeating all odds, the average student graduates from our kindergarten completing three years of school and working one full year above grade level. Now, that's quite a feat for any child—especially one living in a garbage dump.

The teachers—Felipe, Lily, and Beaty, who joined us this year—are the reason for this success.

### Computer Lab

Our new computer lab opened in the spring, thanks to the La Jolla Kiwanis Club and Anne Otterson, who funded this project. Honestly, I believe we are the only kindergarten in all of Mexico that has a computer lab. (I used to say that the success of our students had nothing to do with the latest technical equipment because we didn't have any. Well, I can't say that anymore.)

### Presentation on Life in a Dump

One of my tasks is giving presentations at schools, churches, and social organizations. The purpose is to educate people on life just across our border.

One of the most memorable presentations in previous years was to a kindergarten class. I was telling the kids at St. Martin's Academy in La Mesa, California, how there was no running water or electricity for the families that live in the dirt-floor hovels and how that meant that whenever one needed to go to the bathroom, one had to go outside to the outhouse even in the middle of the night. It also meant there was no refrigerator, which meant no cold sodas or ice cream. When I stated there was no computer or Nintendo, a five-year-old boy slapped his hands on the sides of his face and yelled out, "No Nintendo. That's the worst."

Well, this year a very similar event occurred again. I was giving a presentation at the East Woods School on Long Island. When a kindergartner heard there was no electricity, he gasped and yelled out, "That means no Play Station!"

### Summer Camp/School

As usual, this past summer we ran our camp. Our volunteers came from Kenai, Alaska, Middletown, Connecticut, and San Diego. And of course we had our teachers and Sister Teresa. In addition, to help out with the 177 students, we hired several Mexican teachers, including one police officer. He gave classes in karate. (Believe

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**"I am sending you this donation in honor of my beautiful new baby granddaughter."**

Erlanger, Kentucky

**"You are one hell of a fine man."**

Dallas, Texas

**"I really enjoyed your 20th Anniversary letter. I had forgotten how long it had been since first hearing about you on Inside Edition with Bill O'Reilly. It's been a joy and a blessing to be a part of what you are doing. May the Lord keep you well and safe."**

Greenville, Texas

**"Thanks for allowing me to serve on your board these past few years. I have the greatest respect for all of your work and for all the efforts you bring to the children of the Tijuana dump."**

Former Responsibility Board Member

Lester Machado

**"Seeing people living in such poverty does not amaze. Your commitment to these is what does."**

Stated by a visitor to our school while walking with him through the dump.

**RESPONSIBILITY** is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Our federal identification number is 33-0437290. Donations are tax-deductible.

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me, no one misbehaved in his class.) We also had classes in English, dance, music, art, and computers. Afternoons and weekends the kids were taken to the beach.

### Thanksgiving

Our friends from the San Diego area prepared dinner for 450 dump dwellers on Thanksgiving Day. We met at our office at the border and caravanned down to the dump with the cooked food. There is no better way to celebrate this day than by sharing it with our friends who are so much less fortunate than we are. You might want to mark your calendar for next year.

### Christmas

We played Santa Claus to 918 children in Tijuana. (We include surrounding neighborhood students.) Each student wrote a letter to Santa requesting three gifts. The letter included the child's photograph and a Christmas drawing. We distributed the letters through churches, businesses, schools, and Rotary Clubs in San Diego. People selected a letter and played Santa to that specific child.

In mid-December, \$53,000 worth of presents crossed the border. And on the last day of school, Santa arrived at the dump.

Santa was particularly generous to Professor Felipe. He gave him a used car. (This car was donated to us. It was in perfect condition with only 61,000 miles on it. The gift was an expression of gratitude for all the extra work Felipe does for Responsibility, his students, and the neighborhood where our school is located.)

### Fund-raisers

On November 11, 2000, we held our sixth-annual fund-raising awards dinner at the Hotel Del Coronado. And two days later, Anne Otterson organized Responsibility's first annual luncheon. Between the two events, four hundred people attended.

The Grand Prize winner of the drawing of two airline tickets was Mr. Castillo from Texas. He donated the tickets back to Responsibility. (Thanks again, Mr. Castillo.)

These three events raised \$65,000 for our school.

### 2000 Award Recipient

Cristina Marselli La Rosa flew out from Connecticut to accept her special award of appreciation for her seventeen years of service working with us during the summers. She received her award at our sixth-annual dinner fund-raiser.

## Special Thanks

In appreciation for their support over the past year, I would like to thank the following people and organizations.

### YOU

- Actress Susan Sarandon
- Brian Pines (Susan Sarandon's assistant)
- La Jolla Kiwanis Club
- Jill Dillahunty
- Mira Mesa High School, San Diego
- Scripps Ranch High School, San Diego
- The Bishop's School, San Diego
- John Hancock Company

- J - Author/News Commentator Bill O'Reilly
- S - Central High School, Brooksville, Florida
- Lisa Roth
- S - Southwestern College Students (San Ysidro Center)
- Kevin Lynch
- S - Madison High School, San Diego
- IDEA, Inc., San Diego
- S - La Jolla Country Day School, San Diego
- Our Lady of Angels Church, Alaska

- J - Sister Teresa Jaramilo
- S - Chula Vista High School, California
- Lester Machado, M.D.
- Board Member Marie Glick
- Torrey Pines Chretien Church, La Jolla, CA
- Mr. And Mrs. Jack Queen
- Anne Otterson
- Den MacLeod
- Ruben Villegas

- Jubilee' Community Church, N Carolina
- Board Member Marlene Manan
- Board Member George Hauer
- Board Member Paul Nauner
- Our Lady Of Hope RCC, Carle Place, NY
- La Jolla Presbyterian Church, La Jolla, CA
- Cristina Marselli La Rosa
- Den Vaco