



## *From the Dump to La Esperanza*

**2017**

### NEWSLETTER 2017

As 2017 has arrived we have taken time to look back at 2016 and ahead to this new year. While 2016 had some challenges, we have much to celebrate as well.

#### EDUCATION

The new education program we began last year, unfortunately, did not go as well as we anticipated. For that we apologize to you, our sponsors and donors, who continue to support the children in our care. We are in process of making the necessary changes to ensure a more positive outcome this year.

The school system in Mexico differs somewhat from Canada and the USA. Here children ages four and five years attend kindergarten. Elementary students are ages six to twelve and secondary students thirteen to fifteen. Following secondary school students attend technical school from age sixteen to eighteen. This technical program is required for career/vocational training and preparation for university. A child's education is considered complete when they have finished technical school. It is part of the Mission's vision to help students progress through each level so that they can enter the workforce at the appropriate stage in life.

With the opening of our new education complex the Mission provides supplementary programs for children preparing to enter kindergarten. We teach them numbers, letters and colours, among other things, to ensure they are as prepared as many other students when they enter school.

We also give extra tutoring in English and computer skills to elementary and secondary students.

New opportunities for technical school means increased costs for fees, money for bus fare as schools aren't as close to home, and necessary equipment for career preparation. (i.e. culinary tools.)

The local school system has implemented a new physical education component for all students. While this is a benefit to them it also adds additional expenses to meet the need for proper clothing and shoes for a PE program. We are grateful to the group Pennies for Change in Tacoma, Washington. They collected coins and purchased runners/tennis shoes for the beginning of school in August. Additional financial support is still needed.

We were pleased to celebrate the graduation of a second nursing student at the University of Guadalajara in June of 2016!

As some of our families have moved away we now have fewer students but more funding for education is still needed. Those families who remain with the Mission are now recognizing that education is key to breaking the cycle of poverty so they are more supportive of sending their children to school.

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## NEW FACILITY

We moved into our new facility in November of 2015 and that has enabled us to provide better services for the children in our care. The feeding program moved to the new commercial kitchen and we are now feeding between 70 and 150 children breakfast and lunch daily. Their mothers are learning new cooking methods in a cleaner, healthier environment.

The children are also learning about cleanliness and how to care for themselves. They have learned to use the indoor plumbing and love it!

For the first time, we are able to offer educational upgrades to adults. We are partnered with two government agencies - INEJAD for adult education and IJAS, the agency which regulates non-profit foundations such as the Paradise Village Foundation and the Familias de Esperanza or Families of Hope. The adult education program assists adults in achieving their secondary education equivalency, enabling them to enter the technical program for career preparation. This means that parents are now able to work and earn money for the family. Some have found employment in other places so no longer glean at the dump. A significant change!

## THE MISSION

We are anticipating an exciting year ahead!

As the women, have been preparing meals in our new indoor kitchen, they are also being prepared to move into our new residence. This move will enhance the well-being of the whole family.

With more opportunities for adult education and better family health and nutrition our families will become more self-sufficient and break the cycle of poverty they have been in for generations.

We cannot achieve our goals without your on-going help. Please consider giving generously to help our children and families in their journeys to education, independence and a better life.

Sincerely:

Winnie Giesbrecht

Founder / Director