

Friends of Guatemala

PO Box 33018 ~ Washington DC 20033

September 30, 2021

Dear Friends,

At this time last year, we were entering new territory, with no idea when we might begin to see our way out of the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope this summer you were able to experience at least a few moments of a return to normalcy, although the news continues to change daily. We wish we could report that conditions for our friends and colleagues in Guatemala are showing improvement, but unfortunately, vaccines are slow to be distributed outside the cities, and remote learning is still the reality for many students.

Your donations over the last year for emergency relief efforts and scholarships have provided students and their families with the support and tools they needed to persevere. FOG provided over \$19,000 in Category 1 grants to 42 students for the 2021 school year. RPCV sponsors raised an additional \$44,000 for 111 Category 2 scholarships. By year's end, FOG had collected and donated \$9,000 for covid relief efforts, including emergency food, medical supplies, and aid to families.

The most important thing that your support provides is HOPE—hope for a future that keeps these students from giving up, dropping out, or worse, leaving their homes. With the recent focus on addressing the root causes of migration by helping Guatemalans find hope at home, I am reminded that since our beginning, FOG's mission has been to support local communities and their future leaders **where they live**. While addressing root causes is a complex task, **education is clearly a key**.



Your donations are a direct investment in the future dreams and achievements of students like Arturo, above right, one of our three students at Maya Jaguar school in Huehuetenango. On the left are some of our 80 students in San Juan Sacatepéquez who got together to let Friends of Guatemala know they are grateful for the support they received during this difficult year.

Your continued support is essential to keep students in school and ensure families' basic needs. Staying in school has been and will continue to be a greater challenge than ever with remote learning, technology deficits, and the uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Please, if you are in a position to help, we hope you will support these students and their families.

You can help FOG be more efficient and save resources by donating on line through our website: www.fogrpcv.org

We'd like to take a moment to recognize some of our colleagues on the ground in Guatemala. Ana Isabel, Celeste and Patricia have done everything possible to keep our students on track, providing both personal and academic support while coping with the pandemic themselves. They, like you, play an essential role in supporting Guatemalan students find hope, and a future, at home. We are truly grateful for their work and your support.



Ana Isabel, our
in-country scholarship
coordinator



Celeste, who manages our
scholarships in San Juan
Sacatepéquez



Patty manages the
scholarships in
Sansare El Progreso

I will close with a quote from Celeste, *“Es una bendicion muy grande, en medio de la pandemia, al ver que los becados y becasas estan superando, los estan luchando. Me anima a ver sus sonrisas y emocion cuando reciben sus becas y el apoyo de la Asociacion Amigos por Guatemala. Ellos se gozan a ver que nosotros estamos uniendo a ellos para ayudarlos en sus estudios.”* (It's a great blessing, in the midst of the pandemic, to see that the students are striving and succeeding. It's so encouraging when I see their smiles and their emotion when they receive their scholarships and support from FOG. They are comforted knowing we are united for them, to help them with their education.)

With gratitude,

Valerie Burton, President

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Guatemala/398492540266401>