

Friends of Guatemala

PO Box 33018 – Washington DC 20033

September 30, 2023

Dear Friends,

As many of you know from personal experience, there are many children in Guatemala who cannot attend school or continue their education past primary school due to lack of funds. They have minimal chance of creating a better life for themselves. The need for funding for scholarships is great. Several students have stated there is an economic crisis in rural areas because prices are lower for farm products but the cost of basic needs has risen sharply. In fact, according to the Central Bank of Guatemala, inflation has more than doubled in the past year. Many parents are unable to pay for their children's education. **Your gift is more important than ever this year.**

Friends of Guatemala (FOG) supports students and families in Guatemala by having scholarship applications and funds processed through current or former Peace Corps volunteers and our associates in Guatemala. This allows us to be personally connected to each student and assures donors the funds are being used by students who are in the greatest need. **These connections verify that students are attending school and are excelling in their classes.** Every dollar donated goes to support our students.

For example, Madeline (right) lives in Villa Canales near Guatemala City and earned her degree in accounting in 2022. In a letter to FOG just after graduation, she writes, *"I am honored to have been selected for a FOG Scholarship. I received support for 5 years and want to express my profound gratitude for the help and the opportunities it has given me. Continuing my studies would have been very difficult given the economic situation of my family. The scholarship has opened many doors in my search to realize my dreams."*



Gloria (left) lives in the village of Nuevo San Ildefonso with her parents and 7 siblings. Their Mayan dialect is Mam. She is the only one in her family receiving education beyond primaria, and her parents are very proud. Gloria is in her third year of basico at the Maya Jaguar School in Barillas, Huehuetenango. Her goal is to become a doctor.

For the 2022 school year, your donations provided almost \$22,000 for Category 1 grants to 41 students. RPCV sponsors raised an additional \$62,700 for 110 Category 2 students. This generous support helped students like Madeline to realize her dreams and Gloria to continue working to achieve her goal.



Deysi, pictured on the far right with other FOG scholarship recipients, is a 2023 graduate in San Juan Sacatepéquez. She was the fortunate recipient of a multi-year Category 2 FOG scholarship provided by a group of Spanish language students at a high school in Minnesota. These awesome students raised funds to support Deysi and empower her to complete her basics and diversificado.

Deysi always had a dream and the motivation to be a career woman, but her father works as a cleaner in a restaurant, and it's been difficult to make ends meet for the family. In letters to the Minnesota students, she explained that without the scholarship, she would have had to find work instead of going to school, the plight of many kids her age in Guatemala. Deysi now works as a receptionist and customer service agent, and she says she will always be grateful for FOG's scholarship support.

As an affiliate of the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA), we encourage you to support their work as they advocate for Peace Corps funding and returned volunteer services. Basic membership in NPCA is free. For more information, visit www.peacecorpsconnect.org. We are also happy to pass along donations for NPCA.

The FOG Board trusts that the pictures and personal stories of our students will show you the impact your donations make on the young people of Guatemala. Please visit our website for more student stories. We send a sincere THANK YOU for your continued support. Your generous donation will make a world of difference in the lives of our scholarship recipients.

With gratitude,

Valerie Burton, President

Lois Gallaway, Board member

Meg Rice, Treasurer

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