



Spring Update – April 2010 -

Guatemala Friends Scholarship/Loan Program (Progresa)

email: progresa3@gmail.com website: www.guatemalafriends.org weblog: <http://progresa-quakers.blogspot.com>

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

In 2009 we began to ask all of our students to make small projects in their own communities with the goal of improving some need which the student could be able to accomplish. During the first year we were very satisfied that 106 of the 109 students were able to do so. The variety of projects has been great, from support in preschools to explaining legal issues to local community leaders. This has meant more work for the office staff, but little by little the system is improving. We still cannot offer the final results of all the student projects, but the following are two examples of projects completed.

1) Training in human rights and in being town council members. This Project was done by Pascual Ramirez, who is now in the third year of law school. He worked with community leaders and council members known as Cocodes (stands for Community Development Council) who have the important mission of identifying the most urgent needs of the community and requesting the solutions to the central government. His work with community leaders and town council members had three major themes: 1) rights and civil obligations of Guatemalans in general, 2) protection of indigenous Guatemalans from ethnic discrimination and 3) an in depth explanation of the specific law that rules the



Pascual, during one of his talks

Cocodes (council members). This was the major theme since most members of these councils are illiterate and get very little or no training about their responsibilities as authorities. We believe this project is a good example of a community service project that can benefit both the community and the student. Pascual

concludes: *“My greatest satisfaction was to see that even if the community leaders were illiterate, their leadership qualities were obvious, and they were very thankful for doing the trainings. My personal benefit was that I could interact more with the leaders of my community and get experience in practical things. I also had to study deeper those specific laws which helped me in my studies in general.”*

2) Workshops for women in making decisions.



Rosa in one of the trainings with women.

Rosa Amalia Soloman is a fourth year social work student and did her project in two villages in her community. The objective of the project was to strengthen the participation of indigenous women in decision-making in their communities. This was done in an area where the majority of women are illiterate and have very little participation in community organizations. In her project, Rosa dealt with themes like self-esteem, sex equality, the importance of women in the community, how to participate, and how to involve the whole community. At the end of the project, some of the women committed to run for office in the next local elections. Rosa describes the results of her work as follows: *“The most important product of this project is that now these communities have a group of motivated women who will participate in the decisions of the community.”*

OUR FIRST TEACHING ENGLISH TOUR WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!

The students and the volunteers gave it a top rating and want to do it again. Holding it during the Christmas season was a little complicated and also created higher expenses because of the cost of airfares, so we have spoken to the sisters at the Belen Convent and made our reservations for Tuesday, January 4th through Wednesday, January 12th 2011. The fee of \$900 will cover all expenses, including those of the students, except for your airfare. If you arrive on the 4th and leave on the 12th, we will also pick you up and deliver you back to the Guatemala City airport.

Here are some of the things that the participants in the first Teaching English Experience rated the highest. Number one was the experience of working one to one with our highly motivated university students and the wonderful volunteer teachers. Number two was the beautiful setting of the Belen convent and the fabulous gardens where the teaching took place. And third highest were the outings in Colonial Antigua and visits to the homes of students and staff.

They say that pictures are worth more than words and in this case I think it is true, so rather than say more in the UPDATE I will refer you to our website where you can see many pictures from the week. Go to www.guatemalafriends.org and follow links to Progresa tours and the Teaching English Experience. If you are interested in participating in the January 2011 Teaching English Experience (January 4th – 12th) please contact us at progresas3@gmail.com or mardugan@earthlink.net for more details.



Melinda Barth and Rosa Sunum during one of the classes in the beautiful gardens of the convent.



Our group of volunteer teachers at the end of the tour

VISITORS FROM EL SALVADOR

In November we had a visit from Robert Broz from El Salvador and other friends from Palo Alto Friends Meeting in California, who direct Quaker projects in El Salvador, which were started by Carmen Broz 20 years ago. For us it was a very nice visit because we were able to hear about their scholarship program, which is modeled on our program here in Guatemala. Although there are differences between the two programs, there are also many similarities. More important is that there were new ideas exchanged from one group to the other. For example, since they only work in one area, they can have local support groups within the community. Our students come from many places, but in recent years we do have some special cases where some community support is possible. For example, in the returned refugee communities in the northern Ixcán area we have enough students and graduates where the local community could be more directly involved with us.

It was interesting to hear of their small program of matching grants, in which they offer, for example, to give two scholarships to a community if it commits itself to provide a third scholarship. During the visit, the El Salvador group invited us to join them to celebrate their 20th anniversary on March 21st. After finishing this newsletter we plan to have the office staff and one student to go to El Salvador to learn more about what they are doing. It was a wonderful experience to meet with this group whose

philosophy is so similar to ours and we look forward to seeing them again.

MEET SOME OF OUR NEW STUDENTS

Ada Veliz is 32 years old and comes from San Cristobal Verapaz in the Department of Alta Verapaz. This year she entered in the first year of the professional nursing program in the city of Coban. She was widowed two years ago and left with two small children who are currently ages 6 and 9. Even though she is receiving some help from her parents, her situation has not been easy. She tried to continue her studies on her own but was forced to drop out because of her economic situation. Now, with our help, she hopes to accomplish her dream of gaining a better future for her two children.



Hector Cutzal is 24 years old and comes from San Juan Comalapa in Chimaltenango. In January he began his second year of studying to become a secondary school teacher specializing in the areas of mathematics and physics. He is the oldest of 8 children and has had several part time jobs as a teacher, but the money he earns has been needed to help his parents, who work as farmers, and to maintain his younger brothers and sisters. Something that has impressed us about Hector is his potential as a leader and his inclination to service in his community. He has already volunteered his services as a teacher for IGER, a radio based school aimed at rural students who do not have other access to education. He also serves on various service oriented committees in his community.

Adriana Baten is 23 years old and comes from Cabrican in the outskirts of Quetzalenango. She is studying in her town to become a primary school bilingual teacher. Her dream is to improve the educational system especially in the rural communities. In spite of being an only



child, her situation has not been easy because her mother, a single parent, has had to support her education by working in the fields and selling her weavings. Sometimes other family members have had to help them with food because her mother's income was not sufficient. Nevertheless, Adriana is very well known in her community because she took a course of study as a health promoter and offered various trainings on preventive health techniques and other health related themes. We are sure that with her new level of education she will be able to continue helping her community and will have more opportunities to advance.

SPECIAL APPLICANTS



Edwin Estrada and Juan Pablo Mejía

For the first time our program accepted students with very special needs. Edwin Estrada and Juan Pablo Mejia are deaf mutes. They are part of a group in Guatemala City whose families have made great efforts so that they can continue their education in spite of their limitations. With the help of the Committee for the Blind and Deaf—a private nonprofit organization—they were able to pay for interpreters to complete middle school, but this organization does not help with high school, so some parents decided not to further continue their education beyond that. Fortunately, four families joined together to continue their children's education and sought our help. After studying their cases, we decided to help the two with the best grades who came from poor families. The career they have begun is in computer science, which we think is a good choice for their special needs. We hope they can be successful in their studies.

FORMER STUDENTS

Erika Cojti is a Kaqchikel woman from Tecpan, Chimaltenango. She entered the program in 2004 with the dream of becoming a home economics teacher. In spite of some difficulties during her studies, she graduated in 2007. After graduation she dedicated herself to obtaining her teacher's license and now she has obtained a job with an NGO called Funde Base which is dedicated to sustainable agriculture. The central focus of Funde Base is the restoration of natural seeds in order to create small organic gardens and also to cultivate medicinal plants. Erika's work consists of teaching the families how to prepare food naturally since in recent times artificial products and condiments have become very popular and the traditional methods of cooking are not often used anymore. Although her work can be difficult because she must travel far from her family, leaving her native village and traveling to distant communities in the Peten, el Quiche, Solola, Chimaltenango, and Jalapa, Erika never gives up. She tells us that in spite of the difficulties of the road and the challenges she faces with the many different Mayan languages she likes her work. We congratulate her and hope that she continues enjoying what she is doing in the future.



Juan Miguel Bartolome was born in Playa Grande Ixcán, El Quiché. With the help of ProgresA he studied to become a specialist in renewable natural resources between the years 2005 and 2007. He came from a very poor family but now, thanks to his academic preparation, he currently finds himself with the opportunity to better his situation. Last December we received a letter from him via e-mail which in part says: *"It gives me great pleasure to thank you for all the support you have offered me. Now thanks to your help I have finished my studies and am currently working. PROGRESA will be an institution that I will never forget. Because of the personal and academic support you gave me I have accomplished my dream of completing an academic degree which has opened many doors and prepared*

me in many ways." We thank Juan Miguel for his kind words and we especially thank him for having quickly repaid his student loan. We wish him lots of success in the future.

WE HAVE A CAR!

Yes, by the end of last year the program was able to buy its first own car. This was possible only because of two generous donations from two of our faithful donors: Yvonne Boeger who passed away in 2007 and left us a legacy in her will and Peter Hunt, son of two of our founders: Tom and Trudie Hunt. Not having a car has been a problem for our program in recent years, since it was needed to continue our visits to former and current students, which has improved our program in many ways. This need has become even stronger since community service projects are now required of all our students. We hope that a car will enable us to improve our community service program and give us the opportunity to visit the students while they are doing their projects and help them during the process. Many thanks to these friends for enabling us to have this valuable tool for our work.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE INTERNET

Remember to visit our web site: www.guatemalafriends.org where you will find these and other news about our program, and especially lots of pictures that will give you a better understand of our program. We would very much like to also receive your opinions and suggestions about our program. For this purpose we have created our weblog: <http://progresA-quakers.blogspot.com> Just look for the English page and leave your comments; any input will be appreciated. You can also contact us via email at: progresA3@gmail.com

Many thanks to our faithful donors who make all this possible.

All contributions are made to:
Redwood Forest Friends Meeting and are mailed to: Guatemala Scholarship Program,
PO Box 1831 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

2010 STUDENT ROSTER

UNIVERSITY LEVEL

Career / Names **Age** **Language**

Law (5 years)

1	Amilcar Arnulfo Lucas Morales	23	Mam
2	Edgar Benjamín Ramírez Morales	26	Mam
3	Edgar René Cún Són	26	Kaqchikel
4	Eduardo Jacinto Pablo Francisco	24	Q'anjob'al
5	Ermeregildo Castellanos Caal	29	Q'eqchi'
6	Eulalia Nallely Simón López	25	Q'anjob'al
7	Hector Alejandro Canto Mejía	29	K'iche'
8	Helen Luisa Montejo Montejo	21	Popti'
9	Jacinto Bernal López 2do.	24	Ixil
10	Jairo Benjamín Ajiataz Martínez	28	K'iche'
11	José María García Vásquez	28	K'iche'
12	Karisol Olimpia Ajanel Abac	25	K'iche'
13	María Antonieta Mateo Camposeco	22	Popti'
14	Pascual Ramírez Morales	25	Mam
15	Ricardo Gabriel Vásquez	20	Mam
16	Ronald Alexander Coy Isem	28	Q'eqchi'
17	Santos Mendoza Jerónimo	26	Mam
18	Santos David Villatoro Villatoro	21	Español
19	Silvia Patricia Orozco Juárez	33	Español
20	Velveth Lusmaria Sequen Yucuté	21	Kaqchikel
21	Vilma Angela Chalí Colaj	22	Kaqchikel

Secondary Teaching (4 years)

1	Elena Yolanda Alvarado Tzul	20	K'iche'
2	Isaias Coc Poob	23	Q'eqchi'
3	Joel Anibal Sep Santos	26	Q'eqchi'
4	José Raul Cifuentes Urizar	25	Q'eqchi'
5	Miguel Pérez López	23	K'iche'
6	Juan Antonio Hernández	22	K'iche'
7	Bartolomé Cholotío y Cholotío	33	Tz'utujil
8	Elías Pop Pop	22	Q'eqchi'
9	Miriam Nazaria Sirín Lúç	22	Kaqchikel
10	Hector Leonel Cutzal Calí	24	Kaqchikel
11	Cecilia Silvia López Chití	21	K'iche'
12	Juan Francisco Ixim Suc	27	Poqomchi'
13	Mónica Azucena Patzán Muñoz	28	Kaqchikel
14	Miguel Lainez Pérez	33	Mam
15	Santos Eulalio Sirín Sirín	22	Kaqchikel
16	Juana Sajbochol Apén	34	Kaqchikel
17	Diego Bernabé López Joj	22	K'iche'

Nursing (Professional, RN, 3 years)

1	Ada Ileana Veliz Juarez	33	Español
2	Amanda Esperanza de la Rosa	38	Poqomchi'
3	Angela Nathali Morán Chén	20	Q'eqchi'
4	Antonio Pacheco Hernández	26	K'iche'
5	Astrid Graciela García Sí	22	Q'eqchi'
6	Hector Fernando Xol Tut	25	Q'eqchi'
7	Henry Arael Jó Choco	27	Q'eqchi'
8	Hermelindo Gudiel García Gomez	20	Mam

9	Juan José Bernal de León	32	Ixil
10	Karina Elizabeth Arana Morales	33	Ladino
11	Liliana Yaneth Moscoso Aldana	35	Español
12	María Magdalena Imul Joj	21	K'iche'
13	Rubidia Matías Ramírez	30	Mam
14	Sara Nohemí Gutierrez Batz	26	K'iche'

Social Work (5 years)

1	Amanda Petronila Toledo Ramírez	24	Q'anjob'al
2	Hermeregildo Cho Caal	26	Q'eqchi'
3	Juana María Cún Sisimit	34	Kaqchikel
4	María Josefina Tubac Quill	29	Kaqchikel
5	Rosa Amalia Solomán Pérez	24	Achi
6	Rosario Vicente Mendoza	29	Tz'utujil
7	Audiel Geovani Mejía Velásquez	20	Mam

Psychology (5 years)

1	Aracely Pilar Hernández Mendoza	33	Tz'utujil
2	Carolina Verónica Con Tzep	24	K'iche'
3	Doris Beatriz Martínez Rompich	25	Kaqchikel
4	Obden Aroldo Méndez Ramírez	27	Mam
5	Yuri López Tecú	22	Achi

Agronomy (5 years)

1	Adan Ajcot Vicente	25	Uspanteko
2	Angélica Melissa De la Cruz	23	Español
3	Gilberto Elías Morales Serech	23	Kaqchikel

M.A. in Education (5 years)

1	Benjamín Carlos García Barreno	33	K'iche'
2	Andrés Eulogio Cac Muz	28	K'iche'
3	Benita Luc Cun	26	Kaqchikel

Engineering (5 years)

1	Víctor Manuel Choy Choc	26	Kaqchikel
2	Marcelino Ajuchán Xico	26	Kaqchikel

Medicine (6 years)

1	Ana Beatriz Quevedo Galindo	22	Español
2	Ernesto Estrada Atz	34	Kaqchikel

Accounting (5 years)

1	Rubén Ramírez Matías	22	Q'anjob'al
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SECONDARY LEVEL

Names	Age	Language
Primary Bilingual Teaching		
1 Isabel Cún Sinto	37	Kaqchikel
2 Adriana Ceferina Baten Ramírez	24	Mam
3 Antonio Carrillo Puac	20	K'iche'
4 Berta Alicia Chipix Apén	21	Kaqchikel
5 Bonifacio Cac Cac	31	Poqomchi'
6 Elías Choc Mucú	26	Q'eqchi'
7 Luciana Telón Chutá	18	Kaqchikel
8 Manuel Sacul Choc	19	Q'eqchi'
9 Marta Lidia Gonzalez Pérez	21	Kaqchikel
10 Martha Julia Gabriel Raxcal	24	Kaqchikel
11 Sergio Silverio Maxía Sirín	16	Kaqchikel

12	Tereso Sisimit Chutá	22	Kaqchikel
Agriculture			
1	José Martín Hernández Cruz	16	Mam
2	Simón Cristobal Lucas	17	Q'anjob'al
3	Gilberto Ralios López	17	K'iche'
4	Lauriano Cú Cac	20	Q'eqchi'
5	Pablo Vargas Ramirez	20	Popti'
6	Wilson René Aldana López	18	Español

Young students under special memorial fund

1	Jasmin Mishel López García	8	Kaqchikel
2	Baltazar Leobardo López García	25	Kaqchikel
3	Isabel López García	13	Kaqchikel
4	Margarita Stephanye López García	11	Kaqchikel
5	Pedro Daniel López García	14	Kaqchikel

Computers

1	Edwin Daniel Morales Palencia	19	Ladino
2	Juan Pablo Mejía Gramajo	23	Ladino
3	María Roxana Chub García	15	Kaqchikel

Pre-primary Teaching

1	Liz Darleé Pérez Arriola	18	Español
2	Claudia Lorena Ical Xol	22	K'iche'

Bookkeeping

1	Elena Reanda Quejúj	23	Tz'utujil
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Mechanic

1	Alberto Alexander Calel Telón	18	Kaqchikel
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Music Teacher

1	Esgar Vicente Sontay	18	K'iche'
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Administration

1	Vilma Odilia Morales Asijtuj	18	Kaqchikel
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Physical Education

1	Marcos Gilberto Quiná Yojero	17	Kaqchikel
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SOME STATISTICS OF OUR GROUP OF STUDENTS

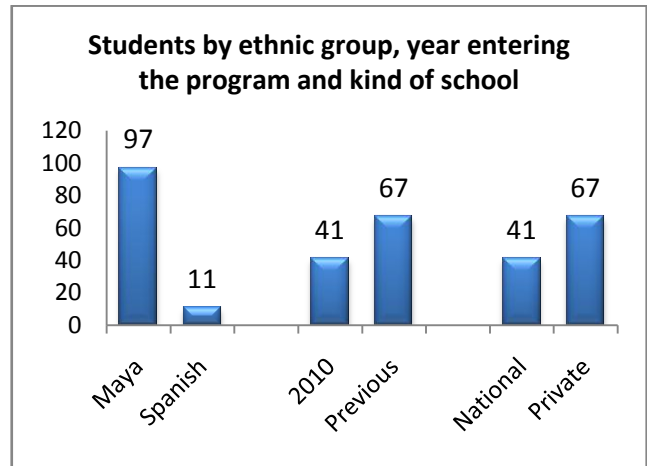
We have 108 students this year, most of them at the university level, as shown in the following table:

	Women		Men		Total	
Secondary	14	13%	19	18%	33	31%
University	33	31%	42	39%	75	69%
Total	47	44%	61	56%	108	100%

If we study men and women separately, we will come with similar percentages for the level in which they study, for women: 70% university and 30% secondary; for men: 69% university and 31% secondary.

The general average age of our students is 24 years, but by level they changed a little: secondary 19 and university level: 25 years old.

The following chart shows other interesting categories for our students in 2010:



Graduates in 2009

We are very proud to present our 25 graduates from 2009, 16 from the secondary and 9 from the university level.

SECONDARY LEVEL

<i>Names</i>	<i>Career</i>
1. Ana Sirín Maxía	Primary teaching
2. Albertina Sanic	"
3. Edgar Caná	"
4. Francisca Quixán	"
5. Juan Chub	"
6. Rubelsi Montejo	"
7. Avilio Gregorio	Agriculture
8. Bruno Recinos	"
9. Daniel Aldana	"
10. Marcelina Chum	Pre-primary teaching
11. Juan Ujpán	Physical education
12. Arturo Diego	Vocational nurse
13. Estefany Muñoz	Music teaching
14. Nohelia Cun	Bookkeeping
15. Luis Gómez	Mechanic
16. Manuel Díaz	Rural health tech.

UNIVERSITY LEVEL

1. Hugo Cuc	Nursing
2. German Lux	"
3. Marvin Tení	"
4. Juan Efraín Tzic	Secondary teaching
5. Victor Ixim	"
6. Angélico Otzoy	Law
7. Alejandro Chan	Political sciences
8. Rosa Sunum	Biology
9. Catalina Miza	Social work