



2020 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

President's Column

By Tom Lindblom

During the February Student Breakfast, I shared that our sponsors had responded with great generosity to our scholarship appeal and that we were able to more than triple the number of scholarships awarded from three to ten. With fully half of our students now enrolled in college, expanding the number of scholarships was and is a key objective. Our thanks go out to the generous donors Jocelyn Servick and Gary Steinhafel, Mike and Kathy Gallagher, Ty and Delia Bujold, Francis Sheahen, Kathryn August and an anonymous donor who have made this possible.

During the breakfast we heard from several speakers that shared the life-changing impact that Nino's has had on them. We love to hear of the accomplishments of graduates of the Niños program and during the breakfast I had the opportunity to recognize a special attendee - sponsor Alfredo Donjuan who is himself a graduate of the Niños program.

Ticket sales for the Annual Fund-Raising Dinner increased this year with those in attendance enjoying refreshments, music, and a great meal for a good cause. This dinner is an important part of our fundraising as it helps to cover the costs of our Zihuatanejo staff and office as well as non-scholarship student costs. As many of you are aware, 100% of the becas go to our students.

By early April it became apparent that the impact of Covid-19 would be devastating to our students and their families. The local economy is extremely dependent on tourism and everything was shutting down. The beaches, schools, hotels, and the hospitality industry ground to a virtual halt resulting in the parents of our students losing their jobs. While our traditional role has been supporting students with scholarships, the impact to our student's families was devastating with many struggling to meet basic daily needs. With little prospect of government assistance and most families living paycheck to paycheck we immediately implemented a plan to distribute an additional \$35 to all 180 students along with the scheduled April 22 and 23 end of year beca distribution.

Simultaneously we appealed to our Sponsors for assistance and I am gratified to report that you responded with incredible generosity. Just over 90% of our Sponsors replied with a total of \$43,000 for the emergency fund. I am so impressed with the level of concern and participation from our Sponsors. We subsequently distributed \$50 to each student (accompanied by their mother) in May, June, and July with our final distribution of \$50 occurring in August along with the inscription beca distribution for the start of the new school year. The response from the students and their families has been heartwarming. Jose reports that "the mothers were very happy".

There is uncertainty over what will occur in the coming months. While schools are scheduled to open virtually and there is an increase in activity, this is all quite tentative, and things could change. Hotels have just been approved to increase to 60% capacity, and if all goes well this will help to restart the local economy. We will continue to monitor the situation and I will keep you updated.

Thanks again for your support. The generosity of our Sponsors is extremely gratifying and instrumental in making it possible to assist our students and their families in these unprecedented times.

Save the Dates

While Mexico is currently open for tourists arriving by air, the Board is monitoring the situation and discussing possible alternatives. We will continue to evaluate the situation and keep you apprised of any developments.

CANCELLED Sponsor-Student Breakfast – **Sunday, January 10, 2021**
February Sponsor-Student Breakfast – Sunday, February 7, 2021 2020
Benefit Dinner – Thursday, February 11, 2021

Message from Jose Bustos



On behalf of the mothers of Niños Adelante, I want to thank Friends of Niños Adelante for all the support you have given to the families in these five months. During this pandemic we paid the support for the families five times from which we already gave the 5th payment to the mothers two weeks ago. I would like you to be here and see how thankful families are and how their faces light up when they receive the money leaving the office happily.

Also, all the students received their first beca payment on August 17th and online classes started on August 24th. Because of this situation many of our students had to improve the technology that they already had such as smartphones and laptops, which is really difficult for some families to purchase. Thank you to all of those sponsors who helped some students with that, without your help their education during this pandemic would have been really difficult.

The situation here is getting better every day, on August 31st we will turn yellow, this will let the hotels occupation go up to 60% which means a lot more Mexicans moving and activating a little bit more the economy of Zihua. The biggest concern is about the opening of the borders with USA and Canada, because that means the activation of the foreign tourism which represents a big part of the economy of Zihua.

Thank you very much for your concern, you are making the difference.

Without your generosity this would've never been possible.

My especial gratitude for all your support for me and my family as well.

Thanks to all for helping us out and from the kids!

Student Breakfasts 2020

A combined total of 300 guests attended the January 12th breakfast (70), held by the Fontan pool and the February 9th breakfast (230), held in the Fontan conference center. This included Sponsors, students, and families. An additional complement of students from the English classes were in attendance at the February event to aid with translating and treat the audience with a performance of songs.

Guests at the February event were also treated to a speech by Hannia Guadalupe who is currently studying her first year of Dentistry at College of the Faculty of Dentistry, Morelia. Hannia's speech is below:

Well, I am here today to share with you a little about my experience in Niños Adelante. My story started about 3 years ago when Thank God, Mr. Jose Bustos and my friend Marbella I was accepted to be part of this big family, I must admit it was an unforgettable day for me!

Honestly, I never before imagined how much my life would change, what I would learn during all this time or that I would get to know such wonderful people in this foundation, who have become very good friends. SO many blessings. I could start by the English classes where thanks to Miss Stela and Miss Ana, their knowledge, support and patient I got the opportunity to learn a new language which is giving me the opportunity to communicate with you now. But also the conversation classes, where the teachers have been motivating us to improve our English, work hard every day and have some fun while we learn. It is a wonderful labor what you guys are doing, thanks Emily, Stan, Shelagh, Ross, Tim, Vincent, Margaret, Alan, Mary and La Vong. I really admire what you, Sponsors, do for your students and their families by changing their lives, it is something priceless. I want to be like you someday and have such a big heart like yours.

Now, I want to give special thanks to my angels, my sponsors Jay and Doris for accepting me as their student. I am so lucky and blessed to have them in my life that I thank God every day for putting them in my way. I wouldn't be here today if it weren't because of them and their support, advice, funny jokes but most importantly, their love. They have become a very important part of my family, motivating me to continue improving my English skills.

And, finally I want to say goodbye with this nice phrase someone who is here told me the other day, and it says: "ALWAYS DREAM BIG".

Thank you!



Student Breakfast Pictures







Student Letters – Covid-19 Assistance



generates great strength, and together we will manage to overcome this problem caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

I hope with great strength that you are in good health, my family and I are healthy thanks to the preventive measures we carry out, despite the fact that we are still producing bread.

P.S. I send you hugs and warm kisses, I hope to see you soon when everything has passed.

Fondly, Juana Lombero Dionicio

Dear Godparents,

I am writing to thank you for the support you have provided through the Niños Adelante Foundation.

Today, my mom has received the generous amount of \$ 700.00 pesos in the offices of the foundation, the same amount that has been used for the acquisition of pantry in these critical days of work and income.

I appreciate the interest and concern for the Mexican families who are supporting academically, I know that the union of people

Hello Godparents Joz and Gary (Servick), how are you?

The last time we spoke, they told me that everything was closed, have you been able to leave? Have you opened a restaurant? Are they still at home office in your company? At Dico we continue at home office, only if required do we have to go to the office, we have different information every day, due to the contingency the stores are closed. I want to thank you for your support and attention that you have had with me in this pandemic, you have always been present at all moments of my life and I hope I can be present with you. I hope you are in good health and we will see each other again, take good care of yourselves.

With love, Paty!

I am very grateful for the help my godfather Steve and Donna Leighton have given me, since this virus situation has caused many families to lose their source of income, including mine.

In Zihuatanejo we live from tourism, and unfortunately with this situation, beaches, hotels, businesses closed. I appreciate this extra support that is being given to us students, that money has become food for the table for many of us.

I hope this ends soon and that we are all well.

Hugs and kisses,

Karina Pascacio

Dear Godparent,

Hi, how are you?. My family and I are fine in spite of the situation that has been going on these days. We're trying to get out as little as possible. I am currently in Zihuatanejo, I came as soon as possible.

Yesterday my parents went to receive support from you and from Niños Adelante. I know that your country is also going through difficult times, so I thank you for your concern. Thank you very much.

I hope you are well, take good care of yourselves and stay at home, please.

Isabel Sánchez

Website www.friendsofninosadelante.org

Questions/Comments
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English Class Update

The English Classes ran for 5 weeks ending on March 2nd. The classes were divided into Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. The classes were held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 3 PM to 5 PM at the church near Plaza Quito.

We had approximately 50 students every session. These students attended their regular school classes from 8 AM to 1 or 2 PM and then made their way to English Classes at the church. Their dedication and attendance were an inspiration to all of us.

Thank you to this year's staff of teachers: Emily & Stan Karhoff, Mary McGlinn, Alan Axelrod, Annette Jones, Margaret & Vinny Diglio, and Shelagh & Ross Yarnell.

Anyone who is interested in helping next year can email Margaret Diglio at [\(margaretdiglio@comcast.net\)](mailto:margaretdiglio@comcast.net).



