

cooperative COMMUNICATIONS

Issue 23
Fall 2008

the newsletter of the cooperative for education

Board of Trustees

Ed McCarter, Board Chair
Patti Ballard
Jim Banks
Barbara Bitticker
Lisa Covert
Denis Forster
Karl Gieseke
David Kammer
Rebecca Keating
David Noll
Denise Oppedisano
Kathy Santen
Carleen Suttman
David Withrow
Jeff Berninger
Joe Berninger

Advisory Board

Glenn Chamberlain
Mario Contreras
Bill Dankworth
Jack and Marie Eiting
Sr. Victoria Forde, SC
Charlie Gallagher
Fr. Mike Graham, SJ
Sr. Katie Hoelscher, SC
Sr. Kris Schrader, ASC

New Literacy & Learning Society Members (Since 2008)

Laurie Bankston & Louise Snyder
Don & Carol Bilse
Diane Damico
Abby Eblen
Matt & Mary Graham
Jerry & Loreda Johnson
Stan & Gretchen Liebenberg
Howard & Lucy Lobb
Sheila Mosley
Northwestern School
(Kokomo, IN)
Rick Schroeder
Don Soltman
Craig Talbot

Please visit www.coeduc.org/lls.htm to see a full list of LLS members.

Historic Event

CoEd proves the sustainability of Computer and Technology Centers Project

by Shaye Worthman

August 6th, 2008 not only marked an historic milestone for Cooperative for Education (CoEd), but for the entire Guatemalan educational system. For the first time ever, a school replaced the computers of a donated computer lab with money saved as a result of a successful sustainability plan. Just six years following its inception, the CoEd Computer Center at Justo Rufino Barrios School in Guatemala City generated enough savings to replenish the original equipment without any outside financial contributions, a testament to CoEd's innovative, self-sustaining programs.

The school's 1,135 students, nine CoEd Snapshot Tour participants, and CoEd staff celebrated the historic event with a re-inauguration ceremony during the five-day tour. Also present were the wife of Guatemala City's mayor, the General Manager of Microsoft Guatemala, and representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Guatemalan media. Howard Lobb, CoEd Technology Programs Director, spoke of the hard work needed to accomplish this feat: "Implementing a computer center involves effort, discipline, and commitment from many people—donors, parents, schools, and CoEd—in order to attain sustainability over years. We want young Guatemalans to have these resources not only for three or four years, but for many more."

In a country where over 80% of mid-level jobs now require computer skills, but just 1.7% of the population owns a computer, educating



CoEd staff, school educators, parent representatives, and officials from the Mayor's office, the Ministry of Education, and Microsoft Guatemala officially reinaugurate the new lab.

disadvantaged youth in marketable computer skills is essential in bridging the digital divide.

While other efforts often fail due to a lack of long-term planning, the Justo Rufino Barrios Computer Center precisely exemplifies what sets CoEd apart from other organizations—its sustainability. Instead of simply donating computers, CoEd invests the minimal fees paid by students in a revolving fund to cover on-going operating expenses and equipment upgrades, thus making the centers self-sustaining.

To date, CoEd has assisted or managed 30 computer centers that provide over 12,800 students with valuable technological skills that will secure higher paying jobs and ultimately break the cycle of poverty in Guatemala. Tecpán Nacional School in Chimaltenango is the second computer center expected to prove its sustainability. Supporters can join in the celebration at the re-inauguration ceremony held during CoEd's February 2009 Delivery Tours.

Tour delivers hope

Snapshot Tour participant Anna Albi shares her experience in Guatemala

by Anna Albi, Snapshot Tour participant



That was the word used by Sue Kelly on the last night to sum up what she took away from the Snapshot Tour. I could not have picked a better word, except, perhaps, inspiration. Both described not only what we gained through attending the Snapshot Tour, but also what we saw in the eyes of the children CoEd serves. It was truly life altering.

For four days, 24 of us traveled around

the effect of such an effort. The glow of gratitude radiated from every child's face. Everyone was so excited and overwhelmingly grateful to receive their new supplies. And there are hardly words to describe how it felt to watch hundreds of kids light up at the sight of me simply because I was carrying a bag of new sports balls for them. I have never been hugged so much in my life!



"I was filled with hope that changes can be made in Guatemala . . . Being an educator myself, it really hit home." -Sue Kelly, tour participant

Guatemala, experiencing the full effect of the poverty that haunts the Guatemalan people. I must admit, I was poorly prepared for what I saw. Fields plowed by hand tools, women carrying baskets on their heads, men walking for miles into town, and kids running through the streets shoeless to assist their parents instead of being in school.

But CoEd is working hard to alter this scenario. They have made high quality education a reality for thousands of Guatemalan students. On the Snapshot Tour, I was blessed enough to witness

In only four days we were able to tour the Guatemalan CoEd office, explore Antigua, visit schools in Santiago, Chipiacul, Santa Cruz and Paquisis, and still manage time to be tourists. However, the most rewarding part of the trip was simply being able to interact with the students, to learn their names, their favorite sport, number of siblings, where they live, etc.

The Snapshot Tour allows you to truly experience the positive effects of the CoEd programs in a short span of time. In those four days, I was sincerely moved by others and so optimistic for our future as a world living in harmony. It is extraordinary to see the great ripple effect that only two people—Jeff and Joe, who founded the organization—can provoke. They started by helping just one school.

Now it is the responsibility of all of us as supporters to help make sure CoEd's projects are available to every student in Guatemala who can benefit. So I will leave you with the two words that best sum up what we were privileged to see on the Snapshot Tour. Hope. Inspiration.



Clockwise from top: Volunteer Patti Guethlein shares a bug with a student at Paquisis Cooperative School; volunteer Ramón Rodríguez with two students in Santa Cruz; volunteer Mike McCool thanks a scholarship student at Santiago Cooperative School for her gift; volunteer Jerry Johnson pals around with a young student during a school visit to Chipiacul; volunteers Jeanie Crotts and Karen Pompeo present books to students at Santa Cruz Primary School.

A way out of poverty

A few words from CoEd program beneficiary Carlos and his father Juan Ruperto

“I don't want Carlos to struggle the way his mother and I have. He deserves better. All our children do. That is why education is so important.”

Juan Ruperto has been a farmer in rural Patzún all of his life, scratching out the best living he can to support his family of nine.

His son Carlos' passion is the computer. From the day he first used one in a CoEd computer class he realized what an important tool it could be for local development—as indispensable as any implement that local farmers, including his father, now use to till the land. Carlos is 17 years old and has already devoted a good part of his short lifetime to helping out on the

“We are poor people here but maybe now...we will see some change for the better.”

family farm—but his parents want more for him. They realize that his future lies beyond their small, overworked patch of earth. Carlos is now taking post-secondary classes in computer science, where he is progressing admirably and is consistently at the top of his class.

Juan Ruperto is convinced that his son's experiences with CoEd have been key in his pursuit of knowledge. “Having books to study from made a big difference for him. And then when he got to use computers he really started to shine in school. Both of these programs are very important resources for our children and our community. They are services which we never had before. We are poor people here but maybe now, with these programs, we will see some change for the better.”

Carlos echoes his father's sentiments. “It was wonderful to have books in the classroom. They helped me to under-

stand the teachers and to study on my own. All of my friends feel the same way. We think we can make a difference now that we have the resources.”



The same plot of Guatemalan farmland that used to sustain one family now has to sustain many more.

The farmers of Patzún still struggle to eke out an existence, but now they have hope. In Carlos' generation, they see a way out of poverty; the lives they could only dream of are becoming a reality for their children.

Letter from new Board Chair Ed McCarter

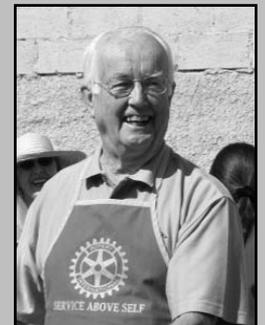


In 2005 my wife and I traveled to Guatemala for the first time for a CoEd textbook delivery tour. It was easy to see the need and the good work CoEd is doing. Joining the Board of Trustees upon my return was a good way to help, and I am now humbled yet ready to guide CoEd, as Chairperson of the Board, through our next challenges and opportunities. The sustainability of the textbook and computer programs is what impressed me most on my first textbook tour, and that focus on sustainability continues to inspire me today. After our initial investment in a school, the coalition of teachers, parents and students raise money through small user fees. That way, they have the funds to replace the books as needed and ensure that the resources are always available for the children of their community. It is a simple system that puts ownership of a community's dreams into their own hands. Our goal is to continue to build on the great work that CoEd has done, and it all starts with YOU. An organization is only as great as its supporters, and I want to thank all of our friends who make this a wonderful organization. —Ed McCarter

In Memory: Larry Peterson

Much-loved CoEd supporter, Rotarian, and tour veteran Larry Peterson, of Moses Lake, Washington, passed away on April 16, 2008. His amazing generosity and hard work will live on through the planned gift designation made by Larry and his wife Lorryayne. The Petersons' legacy of abundant generosity will ensure a brighter future for the children of Guatemala. We thank them for their kindness and remember Larry fondly.

Contact Holly End at 513-731-2595 x4 for information on the many ways you can remember the children of Guatemala in your planning. If you have already made a planned gift to CoEd, we sincerely thank you and ask that you please let us know.





2730 hyde park avenue
cincinnati, ohio 45209-2004

phone (513) 731-2595
fax (513) 731-2335
email coed@fuse.net
web www.coeduc.org

breaking
the cycle of poverty
in Guatemala
through
education

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Cincinnati, OH
Permit No. 1061

Experience a CoEd Tour!

Delivery Tour:

February 13—22, 2009

Cost*: \$1,375 double occupancy/\$1,575 single occupancy

Snapshot Tours:

July 29—August 2, 2009

August 5—9, 2009

Cost*: \$875 double occupancy/\$975 single occupancy

For more details, visit www.coeduc.org/tours.htm or contact jessica@coeduc.org.

*Prices include land portion of the tour only;
airfare is purchased by the individual.



“Your tours are the most highly organized, coordinated, and well done tours we have ever participated in. Every detail had been thought out in advance . . . You are all to be highly complimented!”

—Don Bilse,
Snapshot Tour Participant

Are you looking for a way to . . .
feel a deeper connection with your friends
and with the poor of the world?

Ever wanted to . . .
enjoy the camaraderie of your book group
without the stress of having to finish that
novel by next Wednesday?

What if you could . . .
multiply the impact you could have on
Guatemalan schoolchildren?

*You can do all of this by starting a
Cooperative Community*

*Connect with friends.
Change children's lives.*

We'll give you everything you need to join with others to
positively impact the lives of Guatemalan schoolchildren.
Create your own community of donors and work toward a
self-defined goal. For more info, contact Emily Kenney:

emily@coeduc.org
513-731-2595 ext. 8

Joseph-Beth Booksellers Bookfair Shopping Day: Saturday, October 4, 2008

Joseph-Beth's Rookwood location (2692 Madison Road, Cincinnati, OH 45208) is donating 20% of its proceeds on Oct. 4 to benefit CoEd's programs!